The Islamic Way of Life
and its Fundamental Concepts

By
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English Compilation
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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful!

Preface

Since a long time the requirement for a book was being felt in which all the aspects of the Islamic System would be covered in brief but in a comprehensive manner. It should satisfy the needs of not only the educated class but even the common readers. In order to accomplish the above it was felt appropriate to compile the articles and speeches of Maulana Syed Abul A'la Maududi in which the theoretical and practical aspects of the Islamic system of life were discussed exhaustively.

In this collection of excerpts almost all the things of Maulana have been compiled which are necessary to understand the theoretical and practical aspects of the Islamic system of life.

In this collection, first of all the issue of monotheism, Prophethood and life after death has been discussed. Strong and effective - rational arguments have been put forth that appeal to both the common and the modern mind.

The discussion on Islam's philosophy of ethics and morality, history, development and 'jihad' after detailing its beliefs and fundamentals is also quite realistic and full of deep insight. In the end a comprehensive map of the Islamic way of life is presented so that people may completely understand the way of life that Islam seeks to implement in this world.

These articles and speeches have already been published earlier, but separately in the form of various booklets which are as follows:

Vitals of Faith (Logical proof of Monotheism, Prophethood and Life after death), Islam and Ignorance, The Road to Peace and Salvation, The Religion of Truth, Ethical Viewpoint of Islam, Moral Foundations of the Islamic Movement, Nations Rise and Fall Why, Jihad in the Way of Allah, Witness unto Mankind, The Past, Present and Future of Muslims and Islamic Way of Life.

After this some topics were taken from Tafheemat Volume 1 & 2 (translated as "Insights into Islamic Thought" Vol 1 & 2). Now as these topics have been compiled and published together, its utility has increased even further.

We are confident that this book will serve as a platform for intellectual and ideological training as well as support practical preparation and work at grassroots level.

Sincerely

Publisher

Vitals of Faith

(Logical Proof of Monotheism,
Prophethood and Life after Death)

JUDGMENT BY LOGIC

In big cities, we see hundreds of industries at work, trains and trams powered by electricity. Thousands of bulbs suddenly illuminate in the evening. Fans run in every home during summer. Nevertheless, neither do we feel any wonder and astonishment on these events, nor is there any controversy about the cause of illumination or motion of these devices. Is it because the wires with which these lights have been connected can easily be noticed with our naked eyes. We also know that the wires are connected to the powerhouse. The people who work in the powerhouse are also familiar to us. We even know the engineer supervising them. We are also aware that the engineer is well versed and well trained in his profession. He has many instruments that create the power resulting in the illumination of bulbs, rotation of fans, running of trains, trams, flourmills and many other industries. Thus, the manifestation of the electric power creates no confusion in us regarding its source. The sole reason for this assurance about the causes of these phenomena is that our senses grasp them and we have the ability to witness and observe them regularly.

Suppose all this happened. Bulbs illuminated, fans rotated, trains and trams ran, flourmills and machines worked but the wires which bring the electric current to them were invisible. The powerhouse (generating electricity) was also undetectable. We were oblivious about the workers in the electric stations, not even aware that an engineer is stationed in the powerhouse who is managing everything with his expertise and control. Would our hearts, then be equally unperturbed by looking at these manifestations of electricity? Would not there have been a lot of controversy regarding the causes of these manifestations? Obviously, your answer will be in the negative. Why? It is because when the reasons behind the

impression are hidden and out of sight and the causes of the manifestation are obscure, a feeling of dissatisfaction and frustration is obvious. The pursuit of unravelling that unknown or that secret is quite natural.

Now, extend the discourse on the same lines as the above hypothesis. Imagine that whatever has been assumed is a fact. Thousands of bulbs are illuminated, millions of fans are rotating and trains and mills are running and in action. However, we have no means to know which power is at work and what is its source? People watching them are amazed and overawed. Everybody is trying his or her best to figure out the source of this amazing power. Some say all these things are glowing or moving by themselves. There is no external power to provide them light or set them up in motion. Some say their chemistry or the properties of their base material gives them light or motion. Others say that there are numerous gods outside the material world. One God lights the bulbs, the other God runs the train and the tram, some other god moves the fans while one of those many gods is moving mills and industries. Some people who are tired of applying their minds have started saying that it is beyond our intellectual capacity to find the secret of this magic. We only know what we see and sense, we do not understand more than that, and we can neither confirm nor refute what we do not understand.

All these groups fight each other, but they have no source of knowledge that confirms their assumption or refutes the postulations of others except by way of guesswork and conjecture.

Amidst all these differences, a person arrives on the scene and proclaims "Brothers! I have a source of knowledge that you do not have. I have come to know through this source that certain hidden wires that you cannot sense actually connect all these bulbs, fans, trains, machines and mills. These wires are connected to a huge powerhouse equipped with massive machines run by a large number of people. All these people follow the commands of an engineer who has established this system with perfect knowledge and exercises a firm grip over

the issues and things (involved to generate this enormous power). He supervises and guides all these activities".

This person proclaims his knowledge with full vigour. People say that his claims are unfounded. All groups join forces to oppose him. They pronounce him as a mad man. They beat him, persecute him, and expel him from his home. Yet the man remains true to his aims in spite of all mental and physical tortures. He does not amend or alter his word to the slightest degree in the face of any threat or temptation. No hardship can weaken his resolve. Every word spoken by him reveals his firm conviction in the truth of his claims. A second man follows him and he, too, proclaims the same word in the same manner. A third, fourth and fifth man succeeds and repeats the claims of his forerunners. A series of knowledge-bearers follows by rapid succession. The number of these men swells to hundreds and thousands and even more and all proclaim the same word in the same manner. Differences in time and place or circumstances effect no variation in their claim. All of them aver, "We possess means of knowledge with which common people are not familiar". The people declare that every one of them is mad. They are subjected to torture and violent persecution. They are oppressed in every way and forced to recant from their claim. But all of them remain true to their words and no worldly power can force them to relent. Besides this tenacity of purpose and steadfastness the main virtues of these persons are that none of them is a liar or a thief, or a perfidious, wicked, tyrannical or a corrupt person. Even their enemies and adversaries acknowledge their virtues. All of them bear pure morals; they are extremely pious in character and they excel in good manners among other members of their species. There is no trait of insanity in their personalities. On the contrary, they present such teachings and frame such edicts for the refinement of morals, purification of the soul and for the reformation of worldly matters that it is impossible to produce the like of them and what's more, eminent scholars and sages spend whole life spans in trying to comprehend the subtle points of their teachings.

On the one hand, there are those who refute (the above truthful people) and have varying shades of opinion (in terms of their refutation) and on the other side are the claimants (of the truth) with a common and similar theme. Their case is submitted to the court of "reason". As a true judge, "reason" has to understand and decide its own position first, the position of both claimants next and finally "reason" must make a judgment after comparing both the claims and arguments, conclude which view is sound and acceptable.

The position of the judge himself is such that he has no means of ascertaining the fact of the matter. He possesses no knowledge of the reality. He has before him only the statements of the contending parties, their arguments, their personal circumstances and the external evidence and observations. He has to subject this material to a careful scrutiny and then judge as to which side is probably right. The judge's ruling cannot decide beyond what is probable, because the mass of evidence contained in the docket makes it difficult for him to be absolutely certain about the fact of the matter. The Judge can do no more than prefer the cause of one party to the cause of another, but he cannot affirm or refute the cause of any party with absolute certainty and exactitude.

Position of those who refuse to accept (the claimants and preachers of noble teachings and propagators of moral values)

1) Their opinions about the truth are different. There is no similarity in any of them to the extent that even members of a single group differ with each other.

2) They accept that they do not have any special source of knowledge and are the same as others. None of them claims their opinion to be better or more logical than that of the others. Everyone accepts that their opinions are merely opinions and nothing more than that.

3) Their belief on their opinions has not gained the status of faith, certainty and infallible certitude. There are numerous examples of them changing their views and opinions. Usually a person who was expressing his views forcefully a day before,

suddenly refutes his own view and opinion today and presents another tomorrow. Their theories, doctrines, beliefs, views and opinions change with the passage of time and increase in intellect, knowledge and experience.

4) They have only one argument against the claimants (of the truth and propagators of noble teachings) that these claimants have not presented any proof of their truth. They have not shown us those hidden wires that they claim to be connected to the bulbs, fans etc. They did not prove the presence of electricity by observation and physical demonstration. They are unable to show the electric powerhouse and allow us to test their instruments and machines at work there. They have not allowed us to meet the workers nor introduce the engineer to us. Then how can we suppose that all these things are facts that are truly present as claimed?

Position of claimants (of truth and preachers of noble thoughts and propagators of moral values)

1) They are unanimous in their assertion. They are in perfect agreement in regard to the fundamentals of their claims.

2) All of them say that they have a special source of knowledge that the others do not have.

3) None of them claims to speak based on their individual opinion but everybody claims to have a special relationship with the engineer. They say that his workers come to them. The engineer has also shown them his worksite and whatever they say is based on knowledge and certainty not on opinion and assessment.

4) One cannot show even a single instance when these claimants to the truth might have changed their opinion even to the slightest degree. Everybody has been saying the same thing from the first day of his claim until his last breath.

5) These claimants are of the purest character. There are no trace of lies, cheating and deception. There is no reason to believe why people who are straightforward and trustworthy in

every aspect of life might lie about a particular matter and that too unanimously.

6) There is no proof to allege that they had some personal benefit and selfish interest behind this claim. On the contrary, most of them had to face great difficulties. They were physically tortured, imprisoned, beaten and exiled because of this claim. Some were even killed most brutally with their bodies cut into pieces. Except a few, none of them passed a life of comfort and prosperity. Thus, none of them can be accused of selfishness. Rather their firm determination and steadfastness over their claim demonstrates how they remained committed to their claim even at the cost of their own lives.

7) There is no proof that they are under the influence of evil spirits are insane. All of them have been found to be very intelligent and with sound reason in all the aspects of life. Often their opponents too have accepted the strength of their intellect. Then how can it be supposed that only in this particular matter, the evil spirits caught them and their intellect was negatively impacted? That matter too was no ordinary matter. It became a question of life and death for them. They had to face the ire of the entire world and fight for years together. This was also one of the fundamental principles of their noble and rational teachings (whose logic is accepted by many of their opponents too).

8) They never said that they could arrange meeting between you and the engineer or his workers, or show you his hidden work site, or could prove their claim by observation or experiment. They themselves relate all these matters to the unseen but request you to believe in them and accept what they say.

After listening to the views and arguments of the two contending groups, the court of reason gives its verdict.

The court says that both the groups have looked for the hidden causes of some visible events and phenomena and each group has produced its own theories and come up with its own

opinions. Apparently, all the theories appear equal in the sense that:

1) None of the proposed theories can be ruled out because the probability of their existence is a possibility.

2) None of them can be verified by way of experiment or observation. Neither can the first group give scientific proof of its theories compelling one to accept their claim nor is the second group capable of doing so and hence does not claim to have any proof. However, after pondering on the matter more deeply some important points become known because of which the theory and claim of the second group appears more agreeable.

1. No other claim has been pressed unanimously, vigorously and with such deep conviction by so large a number of wise, pious and truthful men.
2. The fact that so large a body of men bearing good character and belonging to different periods and places unanimously declared that they had an uncommon means of receiving true knowledge through which they ascertained the internal causes of the outer phenomenon forces on the conclusion that their claim is justified significantly, there is no variation in their statements about their knowledge. The knowledge which they have propounded is not devoid of reason, nor is it contrary to the principles of reason that some persons should be endowed with certain extraordinary powers which are denied to ordinary men.
3. Upon considerations of the external phenomenon it seems probable that the case of the second party is genuine. The electric bulbs, fans, trains and factories are not luminous or moving by themselves, for if it were so, their illumination or locomotion would have been automatic, which, we know, is not the case. Their light or movement is not due to the natural property of the material they are made of, because when they are not luminous or operating their physical material remains the same. It would be

incorrect to say that they operate under the control of different forces, because often times when the light goes out the fans also stop revolving, the tram cars come to a stand-still and the factories grind to a halt. Hence all theories interpreting the external phenomenon propounded by the first group are irrational and far-fetched.

The truth of the matter is that there is one Power behind all these phenomena and this Power is being wielded by an Omnipotent and Omniscient Being who displays this Power through various phenomena under an organized and well-laid system. As regards the assertion of the sceptics that, `we do not understand this and we can neither affirm nor refute what is beyond our comprehension', the Juror (reason) rules that this argument is fallacious. The existence of a phenomenon does not depend on whether the listeners are able to understand it or not. Authentic and permanent evidence is enough to admit the validity of a case. If some reliable men came to us and report that they have observed some men in the land of the West flying in the air on vehicles made of steel and that they, while sitting in London, have listened to songs broadcast from America, we shall have to consider the following questions before we believe their statements:

Are these men liars or jesters? Do they have any personal motive in making such statements? Are they sane? If it is proved that they are not liars, nor jesters, nor mad, neither have they any selfish motive in making these statements, and if we observe further if that the same statements are being made in right earnest, without the slightest variation, by a large body of truthful and wise men, we shall surely give these statements full credit, irrespective of our inability to comprehend the phenomenon of men flying in the air in vehicles of steel or listening to songs broadcast from a distance of thousands of miles without any problem has been revealed by truthful men not on the basis of conjecture but through knowledge and intuition."

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LOGICAL PROOF OF PROPHETHOOD OF MUHAMMAD ﷺ

If one were to close one's eyes and imagine one-self in the world of 1400 years ago, one would find that it was a world completely different from ours, having not even the least semblance with the rough and tumble that we find around ourselves. How few and far between were the opportunities for the exchange of ideas! How limited and undeveloped were the means of communications! How little and meagre was man's knowledge! How narrow was his outlook! How engrossed he was in superstition and wild ideas. Darkness held the sway. There was only a faint glimmer of learning which could hardly illumine the horizon of human knowledge. Neither was there wireless nor telephone, neither television nor cinematograph. Railways and motor-cars and airplanes were unknown. Hand written books or copyists alone supplied whatever scanty literary material was there to be transmitted from generation to generation. Education was a luxury, meant only for the most fortunate; and educational institutions there hardly existed. The store of human knowledge was scanty, man's outlook was narrow, and his ideas of men and things were confined to his limited surroundings. Even a scholar of that age lacked in certain respects the knowledge possessed by a lay-man of today, and the most cultured person was less refined than a man in the street of the present time. Indeed, humanity was steeped in ignorance and superstition. Whatever little light of learning there existed seemed to be fighting a losing battle against the darkness prevailing all around. What are considered to be matters of common knowledge today could hardly be acquired in those days even after years of calculated thought and patient research. People used to, undertake hazardous

journeys and spend a whole lifetime struggling to acquire that modest information which is everybody's heritage in the present age of learning. Things which are classed as 'myth' and 'superstition' today were the unquestionable truths of that age. Acts which we now regard as heinous and barbarous were then the order of the day. Methods which appear obnoxious to our moral sense today constituted the very sense of morality, and one could hardly even imagine in those days that there could be a different way of life. Incredulity has assumed such mighty proportions and had become so wide-spread that people refused to consider anything as lofty and sublime unless it appeared in the garb of the supernatural, the extraordinary, and the uncanny. They had developed such complex that they could never imagine a human being to possess a pure and uncorrupted soul or a true saint to be a human being.

In that benighted era, there was a territory -- Arabia-where darkness lay heaviest and thickest. 'The neighbouring countries of Persia, Byzantine and Egypt possessed a glimmer of civilization a faint-light of learning. But Arabia had received no share from their cultural heritage. It stood isolated, cut off by vast oceans of sand. Arab traders, plodding at distances which took them months, carried their wares to and from these countries but they could hardly acquire, any grain of knowledge on their journey. In their own country, they did not have a single educational institution or library. None seemed to be interested in the cultivation and advancement of knowledge. The few who were literate were not educated enough to have anything to do with the existing arts and sciences. They did possess - a highly - developed language capable of expressing the finest shades of human thought in a remarkable manner. They also possessed a literary taste of a high order. But the study of the remnants of their literature reveals how limited was their knowledge, how low was their level of culture and civilization, how saturated were their minds with superstitions, how barbarous and ferocious thoughts and customs, and how uncouth and degraded were their moral standards and conceptions.

It was a country without a government. Every tribe claimed sovereignty and considered itself to be an independent unit. There was no law except the law of the jungle. Loot, arson and murder of innocent and weak people had become the order of the day. Life, property and honour were constantly at stake. Different tribes were always at daggers drawn with one another. Any trivial incident was enough to cause a war to blaze with ferocious rage, which sometimes even developed into a country-wide conflagration ceaselessly continuing for several decades.

Indeed, a Bedouin could not understand why he should let off a person of another tribe, whom, he thought, he had every right to kill and plunder. Whatever notions they had of morals, culture and civilization, were primitive and uncouth. They could hardly discriminate between pure and impure, lawful and unlawful, civil and uncivil. Their life was wild. Their methods were barbaric. They revelled in adultery, gambling and drinking. Loot and plunder were their motto, murder and rape their very habits. They would stand stark naked before each other without any qualms of conscience. Even their women-folk would become nude at the ceremony of circumambulation of the Ka'ba. Out of sheer foolish notions of honour, they would bury their- daughters alive lest anyone should become their son-in-law. They would marry their step-mothers after the death of their fathers. They were ignorant of even the rudiments of everyday routine of eating, dressing and washing.

As regards their religious beliefs, they suffered from the same evils which were playing havoc with religion the world over. They worshipped stones, trees, idols, stars and spirits: in short everything conceivable except God, They did not know anything about the teachings of the prophets of God. They had an idea that Abraham and Ishmael were their fore-fathers, but they knew next to nothing about their religious preaching and about the God whom they worshipped. The stories of Ad and Thamud were to be found in their folklore, but they contained no traces of the teachings of prophets such as Hud and Salih. The Jews and the Christians had transmitted to them certain

legendary folk-tales relating to the Israelite prophets. They presented a harrowing picture of those noble souls. Their teachings were adulterated with the, figments of their own imagination and their lives were tarred black. Even today, an idea can be had of the religious conceptions of those people by casting a cursory glance at those Israelite traditions which Muslim commentators of the Qur'an had conveyed to us. Indeed, the picture which had been presented of the institution of the Prophethood and of the character of the Israelite prophets is the very anti-thesis of all that those noble followers of truth had stood for.

In such a dark age and in such a benighted country a man is born. In his very childhood his parents die and, a few years late, the sad demise of his grandfather also occurs. Consequently, he is deprived even of that scant training and upbringing which an Arab child of his time could get. In his boyhood he tends the flocks of sheep and goats in the company of Bedouin boys. When of age, he takes to commerce. All his associations and all his dealings were with the Arabs alone, whose condition had been just described Education has not even touched him; he is completely unlettered and unschooled. He never gets a chance to sit in the-company of learned men, for such men were totally non-existent in Arabia. He did have a few opportunities to go out of his country, but those journeys were confined to Syria and were nothing more than the usual business-trips undertaken by Arab trade-caravans. If he met any learned man there or had the occasion to observe any aspect of culture and civilization, those random meetings and stray observations cannot be given any place in the making of his personality. For, such things can never have that profound influence on anyone which might lift him totally out of his environment, transform him completely and raise him to such heights of originality and glory that there remains no affinity between him and the society in which he is born. Nor can they be the means of the acquisition of that profoundly refined aesthetic outlook and moral sensitivity. Surrounded on all sides by stone-hearted people, he himself has a heart overflowing

with the mills of human kindness. He helps the orphans and the widows. He is hospitable to travellers. He harms no one; rather, he goes all out to suffer hardships for the sake of others. Living among those for whom war is bread and butter, he is such a lover of peace that his heart melts for them when, they take up arms and cut each other's throats. He keeps aloof from the feuds of his tribe, and is foremost in bringing about reconciliation. Bred up in an idolatrous race, he is so clear-minded and possesses such a pure soul that he -regards nothing in the heavens and the earth worth worshipping except the One True God. He does not bow before any created thing and does not partake of the offerings made to idols, even in his childhood. Instinctively he hates all kinds of worship of the creatures and objects besides God. In brief, the towering and radiant personality of this man; in the midst of such a benighted and dark environment, may be likened to a beacon-light illumining a pitch-dark night or to a diamond shining in a heap of dead stones.

After spending a great part of his life in such a chaste, pure and civilized manner there comes a revolution in his being. He is fed up with the darkness and ignorance massed around him. He wants to swim clear .of the horrible sea of ignorance, corruption, immorality, idolatry and disorder which surrounds him on all sides. He finds everything around him out of harmony with his soul. He retires to the hills, away from the hum and drum of habitation. He spends days and nights in perfect seclusion and meditation. He fasts so that his soul and his heart may become still purer and nobler. He muses and ponders deep. He is in search of such a light which might melt away the encompassing darkness. He wants to get hold of that power with which he might bring about the downfall of the corrupt and disorderly world of his day and lay the foundations of a new and better world. Lo! A remarkable revolution comes over his person; All of a sudden his heart is illuminated with the Divine Light, giving to him the power he had yearned for. He comes out of the confinements of his cave, goes to the people and addresses them in the following strain:

The idols which you worship are a mere sham. Cease to worship them from now on. No mortal being, no star, no tree, no stony, no spirit is worthy of human worship.

Therefore, bow not your heads in worship before them. The entire universe with everything that it contains belongs to God Almighty alone. He alone is the Creator, the Nourisher and the Sustainer and consequently, the real Sovereign before Whom all should bow down and to whom all should pray and render obedience. Thus worship Him alone and obey His commands only. Loot and plunder, murder and rape, injustice and cruelty-all the vices in which you indulge are crimes in the sight of God: Give up your evil ways; He hates them all. Speak the truth. Be just. Do not kill anyone. Do not rob anyone. Take your lawful share and no more. Give what is due to others in a just manner. You are human beings and all human beings are equal in the sight of God. None is born with the slur of shame on his face, nor has anyone come into the world with the mantle of honour hung around his neck. He alone is high and honoured who is God-fearing and pious, true in words and deeds. Distinctions of birth and glory of race are no criteria of greatness and honour. The one who fears God and does good deeds is the noblest of all. One who is shorn of love of God and is steeped in bad manners is doomed. There is an appointed day after, your death when you shall have to appear before your Lord. You shall be called to account for all your deeds-good or bad, and you shall not be able then to hide anything. The whole record of your life shall be an open book to Him. Your fate shall be determined by your good or bad actions. In the court of the True Judge-the Omniscient God-the question of unfair recommendation and favouritism does not arise. You shall not be able to bribe Him. No consideration will be given to your pedigree or parentage. True faith and good deeds alone will stand you in good stead at that time. He who will be fully equipped with them shall take his abode in the Paradise of eternal happiness, while the one who is devoid of them shall be cast in the fire of Hell.

This is the message with which he comes. The ignorant nation turns against him. Abuses and stones are showered at his august person. Every conceivable torture and cruelty was perpetrated on him. And this continues not for a day or two but uninterruptedly for thirteen long agonizing years. At last he was exiled. But he is not given respite even there. He is tormented in various ways in his abode of refuge. The whole of Arabia is incited against him. He is persecuted and hounded down continuously for full eight years. He suffers it all, but does not budge an inch from the stand he has taken. He is resolute, firm and inflexible in his purpose and stand.

One might inquire; how is it that his nation became his worst enemy? Was there any dispute about gold and silver or other worldly possessions? Was it due to any blood feud? Did he ask for anything from them? No! The whole enmity was based on the fact that he had asked them to worship the One True God and to lead a life of righteousness, piety and goodness. He had preached against idolatry and the worship of other beings besides God and had denounced their wrong way of life. He had struck at the roots of priest-craft. He had inveighed against all distinctions of high and low between human beings, and had condemned the prejudices of clan and race as sheer ignorance. And he wanted to change the whole structure of society which had been handed down to them from time immemorial. In their turn, his countrymen told him that the principles of his mission were hostile to their ancestral traditions and asked him either to give them up or to bear the worst consequences.

One might ask, for what did he suffer all those hardships? His nation offered to accept him as its king and lay all the riches of the land at his feet if only he would leave preaching his religion and spreading his message. But he chose to refuse tempting offers and to suffer for his cause, instead. Why? Was he to gain in any way if those people became godly, pious and righteous?

Why was it that he cared not a jot for riches and luxury, for kingship and glory, for ease and plenty? Was he playing for

some higher material gains so that these blessings sank into insignificance in comparison with them? Were those gains so tempting that he could choose to go through fire and sword and bear tortures of the soul and torments of the body with equanimity for years? One has to ponder over it deeply to find an answer.

Can anyone ever imagine a higher examplé of self-sacrifice, fellow-beings benevolence and charity towards his fellow beings than that a man would ruin his own happiness for the good of others while those very people for whose betterment he was striving to his utmost would stone him, abuse him, banish him and give him no quarter even in his exile, and that, in spite of it all, he would persist striving for their well-being?

Can any insincere person undergo so much suffering for a false cause? Can any dishonest speculator and visionary exhibit such firmness and determination for his ideal so as to stick his guns to the very last and remain unruffled and unperturbed in the face of dangers and tortures of every conceivable description when a whole country rises up in arms against him? This faith, this perseverance and this resolution with which he led his movement to its ultimate success is, therefore, an eloquent proof of the supreme truth of his cause. Had there been the slightest element of doubt and uncertainty in his heart, he could never have been able to brave the storms which continued in all their fury for twenty-one long years. This is one aspect of the revolution wrought in his being. The other is even more wonderful and remarkable.

No doubt he possessed an excellent character and charming manners, and was highly cultured, yet there was nothing so deeply striking and so radically extraordinary in him that could make man expect something great and revolutionary from him in future. Of course he was known among his acquaintances as a sober, calm, gentle, law-abiding and good-natured citizen. But when he came out of the cave with a new message he was imbued with qualities that were

unique and hitherto unsuspected: indeed he was completely transformed. Here is a glimpse of his personality:

When he began preaching his message the whole of Arabia stood in awe and wonder and was bewitched by his wonderful eloquence and oratory. It was so impressive and captivating that his worst enemies were afraid of hearing it, lest it should penetrate deep into the recesses of their hearts or the very marrows of their beings and carry them off their feet and make them bid good-bye to their old religion and culture. It was so matchless that the whole Arab legions of poets, preachers and orators of the highest calibre failed to bring forth its equivalents in beauty of language and splendour of diction when he threw the challenge to his opponents to put their heads together and produce even a single verse like the one he had recited.

Along with this, he now appeared before his people as a unique philosopher, a wonderful reformer, a revolutionary, moulder of culture and civilization, an illustrious politician, a great leader, a judge of the highest eminence and an incomparable general. This unlettered Bedouin, this dweller of the desert, spoke with such learning and wisdom the like of which none had said before and none could say after him. He expounded the intricate problems of metaphysics and theology. He delivered speeches on the principles of the decline and fall of nations and empires, supporting his thesis by the historical data of the past. He reviewed the achievements of the old reformers, passed judgments on the various religions of the world, and gave verdicts on the differences and the disputes between nations. He taught ethical canons' and principles of culture. He formulated such laws of social and economic organization, group conduct and international relations that even eminent thinkers and scholars can grasp their true wisdom only after life-long research and vast experience of men and things. Indeed, as man advances in theoretical knowledge and practical experience, so would their beauties progressively unfold themselves.

This silent and peace-loving businessman who had never handled a sword before; who had no military training, who had but once witnessed a battle and that also just as a spectator, turned suddenly into such a great warrior that he did not even once retreat in the fiercest of battles. He proved to be such a great military general that he conquered the whole of Arabia in nine years, in the days when the' weapons of war were primitive and means of communication, poorest. His military acumen and efficiency developed to such a high pitch and the military spirit which he infused and the military training which he imparted to motley crowd of Arabs (who had no equipment worth the name.) wrought such a miracle that within a few years they overthrew the two most formidable military powers of the day and ultimately became the masters 'of the greater part of the then known world.

This reserved and quiet man who, for full forty years, had never given proof of any political interest or activity, appeared suddenly on the stage of the world as such a great political reformer and statesman that without the aid of radio and wireless and press he brought together the scattered inhabitants of a desert of twelve hundred thousand square miles, a people who were warlike, ignorant, unruly, uncultured and plunged in internecine tribal. Warfare under one banner, one law, one religion, one culture, one civilization and one form of government.[1]

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[1] Sir William Muir, an adverse critic of Islam, admits in his book, Life of Muhammad: "The first peculiarity, then, which attracts our attention is the subdivision of the Arabs into innumerable bodies, each independent of the others; restless and often at war amongst themselves, and even when united by blood or by interest, ever ready on some insignificant, cause to separate and give way to an implacable hostility. Thus at the era of Islam the retrospect of Arabian history exhibits, as in the Kaleidoscope an ever-varying state of combination and repulsion, such as had hitherto rendered abortive any attempt at a general union ...The problem had yet to be solved, by what force these tribes could be subdued or drawn to one common centre; and it was solved by Muhammad." [Addition by Translator]

He changed their modes of thought, their very habits and their morals. He turned the uncouth into the cultured, the barbarous into the civilized, the evildoers and bad characters into pious, God-fearing and righteous persons. Their unruly, and stiff-necked, natures were transformed into models of obedience and submission to law and order. A nation which had not produced a single great man worth the name for centuries, under his influence and guidance gave birth to thousands of noble souls who went forth to far-off corners of the world to preach and teach the principles of religion, morals and civilization.

He accomplished this feat not through any worldly lure, or by means of oppression and cruelty, but by his captivating manners, his endearing character and his convincing teaching. With his noble and gentle behaviour he befriended even his enemies. He captured the hearts of the people with his unbounded sympathy and the milk of human kindness. He ruled justly. He did not oppress even his deadly enemies who were after his life, who had pelted him with stones, who had turned him out of his native place, who had pitched the whole of Arabia against him – nay, not even one who had chewed raw the liver of his dead uncle in frenzy of vengeance. He forgave them all when he triumphed over them. He never took revenge from anyone for his personal grievances for the wrongs perpetrated on his person.

In spite of the fact that he became the ruler of his country, he was so selfless and modest that he remained simple and sparing in his habits. He lived poorly, as before, wore coarse clothes, ate the simplest food of the poor, and sometimes went without any food at all. He used to spend whole nights standing in prayer before his Lord. He came to the rescue of the destitute and penniless. He felt not the least insult in working like a labourer. Till his last moments there was not the slightest tinge of royal pomp and show or hauteur of the high and the rich in him. Like a common man he would sit and walk with people and share their joys and sorrows. He would so mix up and mingle with the crowd that a stranger would find it

difficult to single out the leader of the people and the ruler of the nation from the rest of the company.

In spite of his greatness his behaviour with the humblest person was that of an ordinary human being. In the struggles and endeavours of his whole life he did not seek any reward or profit for his own person, nor left any property for his heirs. Even his personal legacy was for his family, it was left for the Ummah. He did not ask his adherents to earmark anything for him or his descendants, so much so that he forbade his progeny from receiving the benefit of Zakat, lest his followers at any future time may dole out the whole share of Zakat to them.

The achievements of this great man do not end here. In order to arrive at a correct appraisal of his true stature one has to view it in the background of the history of the world as a whole. That would reveal that this unlettered dweller of the desert of Arabia, who was born in the dark ages some 1400 years ago, was the real pioneer of the Modern Age and the true leader of humanity. He is not only the Leader of those who accept his leadership but of those who also do not acclaim him as such; even of those who denounce him! The only difference is that the latter are unaware of the fact that his guidance is still imperceptibly influencing their thoughts and their actions and is the governing principle of their lives and the very spirit of the modern times.

It was he who turned the course of human thought from superstition-mongering, love for the unnatural and the inexplicable and monasticism towards rational approach, love for reality and a pious, balanced worldly life. It was he who, in a world which regarded only supernatural happenings as miracles and demanded them for the verification of the truth of a religious mission, inspired the urge for rational proof and the faith in them as the criterion of truth. It was he who opened the eyes of those who had been accustomed till then to look for the signs of God in the unusual, the extraordinary, and the super-natural and, instead made them seek the signs of the Creator to the natural phenomenon spread all around the man. It was he who, in place of idle speculation led human beings to the path

of rational understanding and sound reasoning on the basis of observation, experiment and research. It was he who clearly defined the limits and functions of sense-perception, reason and intuition. It was he who brought about a rapprochement between the spiritual and the material values. It was he who harmonized Faith with Knowledge and Action. It was he who integrated the scientific spirit with the power of religion and who evolved true religiosity on the basis of the scientific spirit.

It was he who eradicated idolatry, man-worship and polytheism in all forms so thoroughly and inspired such a firm faith in the Unity of God that even those religions which were based entirely on superstitions and polytheism were compelled to adopt a monotheistic theme. It was he who changed the basic concepts of ethics and spirituality. To those who believed that asceticism and self-annihilation alone formed the standard of moral and spiritual purity that purity could not be achieved except by running away from worldly life, disregarding all the urges of the flesh and subjecting the body to all types of tortures, it was he who showed the path of spiritual evolution, moral emancipation and attainment of salvation through active participation in the practical affairs of the world around them.

It was he who brought home to man his true worth and dignity. Those who believed that none but a God incarnate or a son of God could be their guide and leader were told that just a human being like them, without any claims or pretensions to Godhead, could represent the heavenly kingdom and serve as vicegerent of God on earth. Similarly, those who used to worship and pay homage to persons who happened to yield some power or authority were told not to degrade themselves since no man was superior to any other man. It was he who stressed the point that no person could claim holiness, authority and lordship as his birth-right and that none was born with the stigma of untouchability, slavery or serfdom on his person. It was he and his teaching which stimulated the ideas of the unity of mankind, equality of human beings, true democracy and real freedom in the world.

Leaving aside this realm of thought and moving a bit further, one will find countless practical results of the leadership of this unlettered person firmly impressed on the laws and ways of the world. So many principles of good behaviour, culture and civilization, purity of thought and deed which are prevalent in the world today, owe their origin to him. The social laws which he enunciated have infiltrated deep into the structure of man's social life and this process continues up to this day. The basic principles of economics which he taught have inspired many a movement for social reform in human history and hold out fresh promise for the future. The laws of government which he formulated brought about many an upheaval in the political nations and- theories of the world and continue to assert their influence even today. The fundamental principles of law and justice which bear the stamp of his genius have influenced, to a remarkable degree, the administration of justice in the courts of nations, and form a perpetual source of guidance even for the jurists of the future. The unlettered Arab was the first person who set on foot for the first time practically the whole framework of international relations, and regulated the laws of war and peace. For no one had previously even the remotest idea that there could also be an ethical code of war and that relations between different nations could be regulated on the ground of common humanity.

In the cavalcade of world history the sublime figure of this wonderful person towers so high above all the great men of all times who are famous as heroes of nations that they appear as dwarfs in his company. None of them possessed a genius capable of making any deep impression on more than one or two aspects of human life. Some are the exponents of theories and ideas but are deficient in practical action. Others are men of action but suffer from paucity of knowledge. Some are renowned as statesmen only others are masters of strategy and manoeuvring. Some have concentrated on one aspect of social life in a manner that other aspects have been overlooked. Others have developed their energies to ethical and spiritual verities but have ignored economics and politics. Some others

have taken to economics and politics, but neglected the moral and the spiritual aspects of life. In short, one comes across heroes who are adepts and experts in one walk of life only. His is the only example where all excellence has been blended into one personality. He is a philosopher and a seer and also a practical embodiment of his own teachings. He is a great statesman as well as military genius. He is a legislator and also a teacher of morals. He is a spiritual luminary as well as a religious guide. His vision penetrates every aspect of life and there is nothing which he touches and does not adorn. His orders and commandments cover a vast field from the regulation of international relations down to the habits of everyday life like eating, drinking and cleanliness of the body. On the foundations of his theories, he established a civilization and a culture and produced such a fine equilibrium in the conflicting aspects of life that there cannot be found even the slightest trace of any flaw, deficiency, or incompleteness. Can anyone point out any other example of such a perfect and all-round personality?

Most of the famous personalities of the world are said to be the products of their environment. But his case is unique. His environment seems to have no part in the making of his personality. It also cannot be proved that historically his birth synchronized with the older of things in Arabia at that time. What one can say at the most is that the circumstances in Arabia cried aloud for the appearance of such a person who could weld together the warring tribes into one nation and could lay the foundation of their economic solidarity and well-being by bringing other countries under their sway-in short, a national leader who would have had all the traits of an Arab of those days and through cruelty, oppression, bloodshed, deceit and hypocrisy, or by any other fair or foul means, could have enriched his own people, and left a kingdom as a heritage for his successors. One cannot prove any other crying need of the history of Arabia of that time.

What one can say at the most in the light of the modern idealistic as well as materialistic interpretations of history is

that the time and the environment demanded the emergence of a leader who could create a nation and build up an empire. But these philosophies cannot explain how such an environment could produce a man whose mission was to teach the best morals, to purify humanity of all dross and to wipe out the prejudices and superstitions of the days of ignorance and darkness, who looked beyond the watertight compartments of race, nation and country, who laid the foundations of a moral, spiritual, cultural and political super-structure for the good of the world and not for his country alone, who practically and not theoretically placed business transactions, civics, politics and international relations on moral bases and produced such a balanced and temperate synthesis between the worldly life and spiritual advancement that even to this day it is considered a masterpiece of wisdom and foresight exactly in the same way as it was considered in his own lifetime. Can anyone honestly call such a person as the product of the all-pervading darkness of Arabia?

He does not only appear to be independent of his environment. Rather, when we look at his achievements we are irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that he actually transcends all limitations of time and space. His vision breaks through all temporal and physical barriers, passes beyond centuries and millenniums and comprehends within itself entire human activity and the whole of human history. He is not one of those whom history has cast into its dustbin, nor is he praised only because he was just a good leader in his own time. He is that unique and incomparable leader of humanity who marches with, the time, who is as modern in every age and in every era as he was in his own period of time: Truly, his teachings are as modern, as tomorrow morn.

Those whom people style as "makers of history" are only "creatures of history". In fact, in the whole history of mankind, he is the unique example of a "maker of history". One may scan the lives and circumstances of the great leaders of the world who brought about revolutions and one will find that on each such occasion the forces of revolution were gathering

momentum for the destined upheaval, were, taking their course in certain directions and were only waiting for a propitious moment to burst out. In harnessing these forces in time for action the revolutionary leader played the part of an actor for whom the stage and the role are set beforehand. On the other hand, amidst all "makers of history" and revolutionary figures of all times, he is the only person who had to find ways and means to bring together the wherewithal of revolution, who had to mould and produce the kind of men he wanted for his purpose, because the very spirit of revolution and its requisite paraphernalia were non-existent in those people among whom his lot was cast.

He made an indelible impression on the hearts of thousands of his disciples by his forceful personality and moulded them according to his liking. By his iron-will he prepared, the ground for revolution, moulded its shape and features, and directed the currents of events into channel as he wished and desired. Can anyone cite another example of a maker of history of such distinction, another revolutionary of such brilliance and splendour?

One may ponder over this matter and wonder how in the dark ages 1400 years back, in a benighted region of the earth like Arabia, an unlettered Arab trader and herdsman came to possess such light, such knowledge, such power, such capabilities and such finely developed moral virtues? One may say that there is nothing peculiar about his message. It is the product of his own mind. If it is so, then he should have proclaimed himself to be God. And if he had made such a claim at that time, the people of earth who did not hesitate in calling Krishna and Buddha as gods and Jesus as the Son of God, just out of their own fancy and who could, without compunction, worship even the forces of nature like fire, water and air-would have readily acknowledged such a wonderful person as the Lord God Himself.

But lo, his assertion is just to the contrary. For he proclaimed that he was merely a human being like others. He said that he had not brought anything to them of his own

accord: whatever has been revealed to him is from God. He virtually proclaimed before his people: Whatever I possess belongs to Him. This message, the like of which the whole humanity is not able to produce, is the message of God. It is not the product of my own mind. Every word of it has been sent down by Him and all glory to Him Whose Message it is. All the wonderful achievements which stand to my credit in your eyes, all the law which I have given, all the principles which I have enunciated and taught-none of them is from me. I find myself thoroughly incompetent in producing such things out of my sheer personal ability and capability. I take to Divine Guidance in all matters. Whatever He wills I do, what He directs I proclaim. What a wonderful and inspiring example of honesty, integrity, truth and honour it is! A liar and a hypocrite generally tries to ascribe to himself all the credit for the deeds of others also even when the falsehood of his statement can be easily proved. But this great man does not appropriate the credit of any of those achievements to his own person even when none could contradict him, as there was no method of finding out the source of his inspiration. What more proof of perfect honesty of purpose, uprightness of character and sublimity of soul can there be? Who also can be a more truthful person than he who received such unique gifts and embellishments through a secret channel and still he out-rightly pointed out the source of all enlightenment and inspiration? All these factors lead to the irresistible conclusion that such a man was the true Messenger of God. [1]

[1] [Such was the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He was a man of extraordinary merits, a paragon of virtue and goodness, a symbol of truth and veracity, a great apostle of God, His Messenger to the entire world. His life and thought, his truth and straightforwardness, his piety and goodness, his character and morals, his ideology and achievements all stand as unimpeachable proofs of his Prophethood. Any human being who studies his life and teachings without bias will testify that verily he was the true Prophet of God and the Qur'an-the Book he gave to mankind is the true Book of God. No unbiased and serious seeker after truth can escape this conclusion.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Is there any life after death; if so, what kind of life is it? This question lies far beyond the ken of our perception. We do not have the eyes with which we could see beyond the frontiers of worldly life and find out what lies beyond it. We do not have the ears with which we could hear anything from beyond these frontiers. Nor do we have any instrument by which we could determine with certainty whether there is any, life beyond death. Therefore, the question whether there is any life after death lies completely outside the province of scientific knowledge which is concerned with the classification and interpretation of sense data. Anyone who asserts in the name of science that there is no life after death, therefore, makes a very unscientific statement. Merely on the basis of scientific knowledge, we can neither affirm that there is a life after death nor deny it. Until we discover a dependable means of acquiring knowledge about this matter, the correct scientific attitude

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Furthermore, this must also be clearly understood that, now, through Muhammad (peace be upon him) alone can we know the straight path of Islam. The Qur'an and the life-example of Muhammad (peace be upon him) are the only reliable sources that are available to mankind to learn God's Will in its totality. Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of God for the whole of mankind and the long chain of prophets has come to an end with him. He was the last of the prophets and all the instructions which it was God's Will to impart to mankind through direct revelation were sent by Him through Muhammad (peace be upon him) and are enshrined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Now, whoever is a seeker of truth and anxious to become an honest Muslim, a sincere follower of the way of God, it is incumbent upon him to have faith in God's last Prophet, accept his teachings and follow the way that he has charted for man. This is the road to success and salvation. [Addition by translator]

would be neither to affirm nor to deny the possibility of life after death. The question is beyond its jurisdiction.

But can we possibly maintain this attitude in life? Can we afford to adhere to this neutrality? Theoretically speaking, this may hold good but looking to the hard realities of life which we have to face on every turn and pass, our answer would be: certainly not. If we do not have the means to know a thing directly, it is of course possible for us, from a purely rational point of view, to refrain from either affirming or denying it. But if the thing is directly concerned with our everyday life, we cannot maintain that attitude and must either affirm or deny its existence. In order to live a full life on the earth we must have a definite attitude towards such problems. These questions simply cannot be avoided. For instance, if you do not know a person with whom you do not have any dealings, you may refrain from forming an opinion about his integrity and trustworthiness. But if you have to deal with him, you must do so either on the assumption that he is an honest man or on the supposition that he is not. You may also proceed with the idea that until his honesty is either proved or disproved in practice, you will deal with him on the assumption that his integrity is doubtful. But this manner of dealing with him would, in effect, be no different from the way you would deal with him if you were convinced of his dishonesty. Therefore, a state of doubt between affirmation and denial is possible only as an abstract idea; it cannot form the basis of practical dealings, which require a positive attitude of either affirmation or denial.

A little reflection should help us to see that the question of life after death is not merely a philosophical question; it is deeply and intimately related to our everyday life. In fact our moral attitude depends entirely upon this question. If a person is of the view that the life of this world is the only life and that there is no life of any kind after that, he must develop a particular type of moral attitude. A radically different kind of attitude and approach is bound to result if he believes that this life is to be followed by another life where one will have to render account of all one's acts in this world and that one's

ultimate fate in the Hereafter will depend upon one's conduct in worldly life. Let us try to understand this through a simple example. A person undertakes journey from Lahore to Karachi on the assumption that he is travelling to his final destination where he will be beyond the reach of the police that could haul him up for an offence, and the jurisdiction of the courts of justice that could bring him to book. Another person undertakes the same journey knowing that it is only the first stage of a longer journey which will carry him, beyond Karachi, to a land overseas which is ruled by the same sovereign as that of Pakistan. He also knows that the court of that sovereign has complete secret dossiers of his activities in Pakistan and that this record will be fully examined there in order to decide what position and treatment he deserves by virtue of his past performance. Now, it should be easy to realize how different the conduct of these two travellers of the same train will be. The former will prepare himself only for the journey up to Karachi, whereas the latter will keep in view also the requirements of the further stages of the long journey. The former will assume that all the gains that he can possibly make, or all the losses or harms that he might suffer will be confined to the journey up to Karachi, and that will be the end of it. The latter, on the other hand, will know that the real gains or losses of the journey will be realized in its last stages and not in the first. The former will keep in view only those results of his actions as are likely to manifest themselves up to the time that he reaches Karachi; the latter's visit will extend to the long-term results likely to unfold themselves in the distant overseas lands where his journey will eventually take him.

Now it is obvious that this difference between the approaches and attitudes of the two travellers results directly from their view of the nature of their journey and its end. Similarly, a person's views in regard to life after death have a decisive influence upon his moral conduct in this world. The direction of every step that he takes in his practical life will depend upon whether he treats this worldly life as the first and last stage of life or whether he also has in view the Hereafter

and the consequences of his conduct in this world or the next one. He will move in one direction in the first instance and in exactly the opposite direction in the other instance.

From this it should be clear that the question of life after death is not merely a fruitless intellectual or philosophical exercise but a question that intimately concerns and vitally affects our everyday life. There is, therefore, no justification for any scepticism in this matter. Any attitude that is determined by scepticism in regard to the Hereafter could not in effect be any different from the one based on a definite rejection of the idea of a life after death. We are, therefore, obliged to make up our minds whether there is a life after death or not. If science cannot help us here, we must seek the aid of rational thinking and logical reasoning.

But what is the material upon which we could base this logical reasoning? There is, first, man himself, and then the system of the universe. We shall, therefore, try to study man against the background of the Universe and see whether all his requirements are fulfilled within this system or whether some of them remain unsatisfied and need some other kind of system for their satisfaction.

Now man has various aspects. First of all, he has a body which is composed of various minerals, salts, gases and water. The Universe is a vast system containing, from tiny specks of dust to the large planets moving in their orbits. We find, ourselves dazzled with the spectacle of a plethora of things: the earth, stones, metals, salts, gases, rivers, oceans and an unending array of things need a set of laws to govern their existence and operation, and all these laws are at work within the Universe. They provide a free opportunity for the various elements and forces of nature to play their part in the Universe; similarly, the human body has a full and free opportunity to live and work under these laws. Secondly, man is a being who has grown through nourishment derived from the things around himself. Similarly, there are various kinds of trees, plants and herbs in the Universe which are governed by the laws that are essential for growing bodies.

Moreover, man is a living being who moves arid acts of his own free will; he procures food for himself, protects himself and ensures the preservation of the species. Again, there are various other beings of this kind in the Universe: on land, in water and in the air, there are myriads of animals whose lives and functions are governed completely by the laws what are sufficient to cover the whole gamut of their activities.

Above all, there is the moral aspect of man's being, which is endowed with the consciousness of good and evil, the faculty to discriminate between the two, and the power to do good as well as evil. Man's nature demands that good deeds should have good results and evil deeds should lead to evil consequences. He can discriminate justice from tyranny, truth from falsehood, right from wrong, mercy from cruelty, kindness from arrogance, generosity from meanness, trustworthiness from breach of trust and so on and so forth. These qualities are not abstract ideas but are actually experienced in human life and have a deep and far-reaching effect on human culture. Therefore, the nature with which man is endowed strongly demands that his acts should lead inexorably to their moral consequences, in the same way as they lead to their physical effects.

But let us look around and reflect a little deeply upon the system of the Universe. Can the moral consequences of human actions fully unfold themselves in this system? On the basis of the body of knowledge that we possess we can confidently assert that this is not possible, because, for all that we know, there is no other creature in the Universe which is endowed with moral consciousness. The whole system is governed by the physical laws of the Universe, and the moral laws of the human realm are not at work anywhere in their full measure. For instance, money carries both value and weight in human affairs but truth often lacks both. The mango seed always ultimately yield mangoes, the devotee of truth, on the other hand, sometimes receives bouquets but sometimes, rather often, brickbats. The material objects in the world are governed by law which always lead to certain pre-determined results, but

within the dynamics of the working of these laws the operation of the moral forces in the human world is not so manifest. The laws of nature often fail to ensure the logical moral consequences of human actions; and even where we find such consequences they occur only the extent the laws of nature permit. It is a physical world that we live in. And it often happens that the actual consequences of an act under the laws of nature are simply contrary to what the law of ethics demands. Through cultured and civilized life and political organization, man has no doubt striven to some extent to ensure that the acts of man lead to set and pre-ordained moral consequences according to a code of ethics. But these efforts have been on a very limited scale and extremely deficient. They have been vitiated, on the one hand, by the operation of natural laws, and one on the other by man's own weaknesses and shortcomings.

Let us try to understand this with the help of a few examples. If a person sets fire to the house of an enemy, the house will be gutted; this will be the natural result of the act. The moral consequence of the act should be the punishment of the criminal commensurate with the damage that he has caused to the family whose home he has burnt. But this consequence can come about only if the culprit can be traced and apprehended by the police, the charge against him is proved, and the court can estimate fully the loss that his offence has caused to the affected family and its future generations, and then awards to the offender a punishment commensurate with his crime. If any of these conditions is not duly fulfilled, the moral consequence will either not manifest itself at all or will unfold itself only partially; nay, it is quite possible that the culprit may go scot-free and even remain happy and become prosperous after having ruined his enemy.

Let us take another example: We often find that a few people manage, by hook or by crook, to acquire a strong hold over a whole community, which begins to follow them. Taking advantage of this position these leaders bamboozle their people into following their jingoism and militant imperialism. They

lead their people into war with their neighbours. Several countries are ruined in these wars, millions of men are killed and many more are forced to live in misery and degradation. Their misdeeds have far reaching effect on human history for countless generations, even many long centuries. Now, is it possible for such criminal maniacs to be punished sufficiently for their crimes and follies in this life? Indeed, they would not be adequately punished even if they were all literally thrown to the wolves, or burnt alive, or subjected to any other torture of which man is capable. No conceivable punishment could possibly by measured against the grave harm caused by them to millions of men for countless generations. Under the natural laws that govern the system of the Universe they could not possibly be awarded punishment commensurate with their crimes and follies. Even if a Chenghiz or a Hitler is torn to pieces, this punishment stands with no comparison to the wrongs they perpetrated on humanity.

Or, on the other hand, take the example of the great prophets, the sages and the pious and virtuous men who called mankind to the truth and the right path arid guided them out of darkness into light, and whose ideas and teachings and practical examples have benefited millions of men for centuries. And they did all this good to mankind, bracing all the tempests of adversity that came in their way and suffering miserably at the hands of the vested interests. It is possible to reward such men adequately in this short span of life within the limits of the physical laws that govern the world?

As we have argued above, the laces that govern the present system of the Universe do not allow an opportunity for the full unfolding of the moral consequences of human actions. Secondly, the actions of men during their short span of life on earth often have reactions and effect so widespread and lasting that their full consequences must take thousands of years to unfold and manifest themselves fully; and it is obviously impossible for any person, under the present laws of nature, to attain such a long career on earth. From this it logically follows that while the present physical world and its natural laws are

enough for the material and animal constituents of man, they are utterly inadequate for the moral element of his being. This component calls for another world where the law of ethics of the governing law and the laws of nature are subservient to it; where life is unlimited; where all the moral consequences of human actions in the material world that could not manifest them there, should manifest themselves fully and in the proper form. It demands a world where truth and righteousness, and. not gold and silver, carry weight; where fire burns only such things as deserve to be burned according to the moral law; where happiness and comfort are the lot of the virtuous and pain and misery the plight of, the wicked. Both nature and reason demand such an order.

So far as logical reasoning is concerned, it only indicates that such a world ought to be. But as to the question whether such a world does in fact exist, neither reason nor knowledge can give us a categorical answer. And it is here that the Qur'an helps us. It assures us that the world that our nature as well as our reason demands shall be a reality one day. The present system of the Universe, which was created in accordance with physical laws, will be demolished at one stroke; and it will be replaced by another world where the earth, the heavens and all other things will be essentially different from what they are here. God, Almighty will then resurrect all the men who were born from the beginning of creation down to its end, and will make all of them appear before Himself at one time. The records of all the deeds of individuals, communities, and mankind at large, will be there without the slightest error or omission. Also there will be complete reports of the effects and consequence of all human actions in the material world; and all the generations of men affected by them will be present in the witness box. Every particle affected in any way by the deeds or words of men will tell its own story. And the limbs, the ears, the eyes and all other parts of the human body will stand witness how they were used or abused in life. On the basis of this unimpeachable evidence and those complete records; Allah, the Supreme Sovereign of the Universe, will decide

each case with perfect justice and pronounce the reward or penalty as the case may be. The reward as well as the punishment will be of a magnitude that cannot even be estimated by the limited standards of the material world. The standards of time and space, and weights and measurements, and the natural laws, will be essentially different from those prevailing in the present world. The virtues whose beneficent effects extend over several centuries in this world will be fully rewarded there, and neither death nor illness nor old age will be able to cut short the enjoyments of the reward. On the other hand, the evil deeds whose effects and consequences blight the lives of millions in this world for hundreds of years will be punished fully, and neither death nor coma will be able to relieve the pain and distress of the sufferer.

If the existing system of the Universe with its present natural laws is a possibility and are a reality, why should another world with a different set of natural laws is regarded as an impossibility?

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The Road to Peace and Salvation

The Road to Peace and Salvation

[This speech was delivered in Kapurthala, Punjab before a mixed gathering of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs]

On The Existence of the Divine Being

If someone were to tell you that in the centre of town there was a big store, with no sales staff or managers, which was running smoothly, with goods coming in on time and being sold automatically to customers, would you believe it? Could you accept the notion of goods coming in without any supplier, and being sold without the agency of any salesmen? Could you agree that the goods in the shop would be safe from burglars and thieves without the supervision of security staff? It goes without saying that nobody in his right mind could believe in the existence of such a store. Or take another example: Suppose somebody told you that he had seen a large factory running by-itself without any managers, foremen, engineers or machine operators. Imagine, furthermore, being told that the factory had come into existence spontaneously, that all the components of the machines had fitted themselves into place and were running smoothly, churning out excellent products.

Surely you would doubt the sanity of the person telling you this story -only a mad-man could make up such a tale!

Think, then, about these examples: Could you accept that an electric light bulb would generate light by itself? Could the greatest philosopher in the world convince you that a chair had assumed its present form by itself? Could you be persuaded that the cloth of your coat had woven itself, or that your house had not been built, but had come into existence spontaneously?

These are just a few everyday examples. But if you cannot believe that a shop can be run without salesman, or that a factory can be built without engineers and run without staff, how can you possibly be persuaded that the Universe is without a creator or master? In the vast complexity of the Universe, countless living beings and innumerable heavenly bodies function and interact with clockwork precision. Vapour rises from the oceans and forms into clouds; the wind blows the clouds to distant parts of the earth and, under the right conditions, the vapour condenses and falls to the earth as rain. The rain-water brings the dead earth to life, and facilitates the growth of food-crops, trees, fruit and flowers. Could any rational person be convinced that this vast, complex and integrated system came into existence without any creator and is running without a master controller?

We have no hesitation in dismissing as a lunatic a person who believes that a piece of cloth or a chair came into existence spontaneously; can we then accept the thesis of the person who says that the earth sprang into existence of its own accord, that the animals came to life by themselves and that the most complex of living beings mankind came into existence without any Creator? Chemical analysis of the physical make-up of the human body has shown it to be composed of certain quantities of iron, carbon, sulphur, phosphorus, calcium, sodium, etc. substances which would cost no more than a few pennies altogether. But could anybody create a human being merely by combining these substances in the same proportion in which they are found in the human body?

Surely not so how can we be expected to believe that a human being, capable of such complicated feats of technology as making aeroplanes and televisions, came into existence without the design of a superior intelligence and the skill of a master craftsman?

Have you ever thought about how the human infant is formed and developed in the tiny workshop of the mother's womb? Neither father nor mother has anything to do with this wonderful process. At a moment of which neither father nor

mother is aware, two small "life germs", which cannot even be seen without the aid of a microscope, come together and unite. Thereafter, the new life draws it's nourishment from the mother's blood, which supplies it with sufficient quantities of iron, calcium and other essential nutrients. In time, the two cells which initially united develop into a bundle of cells, like a lump of flesh. Then this "lump" begins to acquire a definite and recognizable shape, and the various organs and parts of the body begin to grow in the appropriate places: the eyes, ears, brain, heart, bones and muscles are all developing as and where they should. The embryo then acquires life, and begins to develop senses. When the embryo has at last developed into a fully-formed human infant, the small workshop of the womb delivers it to the outside world, to begin independent life. These "uterine workshops" are delivering millions of new infants every day, but every single one is different from the others in appearance, voice, and disposition and potential. Even "identical" twins will have some important differences, and will never be one hundred percent identical. This is indeed a marvel which staggers the imagination.

Only a person who is out of his mind could believe that the whole wonderful system of life and the universe, which has continued for countless centuries and generations, could have come into existence without the agency of a wise, all-knowing and all-powerful God.

THE UNITY OF GOD

Let us take the matter of life a little further. Anyone possessed with basic common-sense would accept that no enterprise, whether big or small, can run smoothly unless a single person is made ultimately responsible for its progress. Have you heard of a single school with two headmasters, a department with two directors, an army with two commanders-in-chief, or a country with two presidents? Could any institution under such dual control function efficiently? Even in everyday life, we are aware that "too many cooks spoil the broth". Any project left under the leadership of more than one

person cannot be managed properly. They will bicker and squabble until the work is ruined. However good the team spirit may be, good management, smooth working and efficiency are inconceivable without the presence of a single authority in ultimate control.

Bearing this simple, common-sense fact in mind, take a look around you at the grand system of the universe. Look at the planets in constant motion, the earth on which you live, the moon which rises in the evening and the sun which rises at dawn; their movements indicate a strict set of rules or laws. Have you ever found evening setting in or the sun rising before the natural hour? Has the moon ever collided with the earth? Has the sun ever deviated from its fixed position? Have you ever heard of a planet deviating from its fixed course by even a hair's breadth? Like the parts of a watch, these millions of heavenly bodies, some of which are thousands of times bigger than our own earth or sun, are following their appointed courses strictly in accordance with the "laws of nature". The distances between them, and the direction and speed of their movements, are fixed, and even the slightest deviation of one of them would throw the entire system into chaos.

Moving down from the heavens to our own earth, let us look more closely at the world in which we live, and at our own selves. The whole system of the earth and the drama of life which we see enacted upon it are governed by certain strict rules. For example, the gravitational pull of the earth keeps everything on it in its proper place. If the earth were to relax this hold for even a second, the world would quite literally fall to pieces. All the wheels and cogs of the world's vast workshop are governed by a rigid set of regulations, which cannot be altered in the least. Air, water and light obey the laws laid down for them; the seasons of the year adhere strictly to the schedule set out for them. Rocks, metals, electricity, trees, and animals nothing has the power to overstep the boundaries within which it is required to exist by the laws which govern it. Nothing can change its qualities or properties, or refuse to discharge the duties assigned to it.

Within the limits set, all parts of this vast machine are cooperating with one another, and every event and development we witness is due to this co-operation. Take the apparently insignificant example of a seed which has been sown in the ground. It is obvious that the seed cannot germinate and grow unless everything else in heaven and earth cooperates in sustaining it and aiding its development. The soil has to provide it with the necessary heat and light. Water and air also have their part to play. The night makes it cool and provides dew; the day brings warmth and helps it to germinate and grow. The various elements cooperate for months, even years, on end, until the plant reaches maturity and bears fruit. All the crops which provide our food and sustenance grow as a result of this co-operation between the various forces of nature. Indeed, we are only alive because of this natural cooperation which sustains us. If the co-operation of any one of these elements was to be withdrawn, life would become virtually, if not absolutely, impossible. If, for example, the air were to withdraw itself from this cooperative enterprise, we would instantly cease to exist. If water refused to act in harmony with the air and heat in the atmosphere, there would be not a drop of rain. If the soil did not cooperate with water, our gardens and fields would dry up, our crops would never ripen, and we would never be able to build houses. If fire refused to be kindled, all our ovens, mills and factories would grind to a halt. If iron refused to react to fire, we would not be able to make a needle or a knife, not to mention cars, trains and heavy machinery. In short, the world in which we live exists only because of the interdependence and cooperation of the various elements and "departments" of the world around us.

Could anyone find anything wrong or false in the statements made above? If it is all true, and supported by our own observations, is it not natural to wonder about the raison d'être of this whole grand scheme, with its regularity and harmony, this perfect cooperation between the myriad elements and forces of the Universe? The cosmos has existed as such for billions of years; trees and animals have existed on the earth

for millions of years; mankind has lived on earth for thousands of years. But the system of the Universe has never experienced any disruption. The moon has never fallen upon the earth, or the earth collided with the sun. The fixed duration of day and night has never altered, and soil and water, fire and heat have continued their appointed partnerships. One is bound to wonder, why all the various 'departments' of this vast realm adhere so strictly and faithfully to the rules and regulations laid down for them? Why do they not fall foul of one another? Why is there no disorder or disturbance in this system? What is the force that keeps its various parts under the control of a single administration?

You only have to search your own hearts for the answers. Don't you feel intuitively that a single Divine Being is the Sovereign of the Universe and that it is the Supreme Power of this Single Sovereign that keeps everything in the Universe subject to His own laws and regulations? If this Universe were governed by two gods let alone several -its affairs could not possibly have been run so regularly and efficiently. If even a small enterprise such as a school or business cannot be run by two leaders at the same time, how could the vast realms of the heavens and earth be run by more than one Sovereign?

In short, it is a fact that the Universe did not come into existence by itself, and that it is not functioning spontaneously. The universe has been created, and is being run, by a single Being. The regularity, precision and efficiency with which it is being run, and the adherence of all its components to its laws leaves no room for any doubt that it is under the control of a single Administrator. The strictness of the laws of the Universe bears testimony to the fact that a single Sovereign rules the heavens, the earth and everything in between. The sun, the moon and the stars, the earth and all that it contains rivers, trees, mountains, animals -are all under His command. The life and death of human beings are in His hands. He has full control over the whole world, and nothing is able to enforce its own will in the kingdom of God.

The perfect order of the Universe precludes the existence of more than one administrator. The very nature of its organization demands that no other being should have a share in His authority, that there should be a single Ruler and that all other beings should be His subjects. If any other being enjoyed even a fraction of the original authority, disorder, indiscipline and chaos would surely follow. Moreover, the administration of such a vast realm demands not only power, but also knowledge. It requires such a vision as can encompass the whole universe at one time, and a mind so comprehensive that it can issue commands and directions whilst keeping in view the needs and demands of the entire system. The organization of the universe would surely have been disrupted if some lesser "deities", not endowed with this universal vision, had been allowed to share the sovereignty of the universe with the supreme Lord and Master, and been entrusted with authority over particular matters and certain parts of creation. Even a simple machine is likely to be thrown out of gear if it is entrusted to a person who does not know how to operate it and tries to interfere with its workings.

With regard to the greater system of the Universe, the very fact that it is being run with complete efficiency and order should make it clear that no force or being shares even the slightest degree of the sovereignty of the Universe with God.

This is not merely a statement of fact. It is also right and proper that God's sovereignty over the universe should not be shared with any other entity and that His law alone should govern the entire realm. Those who are His own creatures, who depend entirely upon His mercy for their very survival, who cannot live for a second by virtue of their own capacities, are surely not competent to share His sovereignty. Could a servant share his master's right of ownership? Would a master share his power or rights with his servant? Such a situation is not only unacceptable according to the patent realities of the universe; it is also repugnant to reason, nature, truth and logic.

THE REAL CAUSE OF MAN'S DISTRESS

These are the basic realities underlying the scheme and system of this world and of the entire Universe. As the saying goes, "No man is an island"; none of us exists independently - each of us is a part of the grand system, like parts of a machine. For every one of us, therefore, these realities are as relevant and fundamentally important as they are for the world as a whole.

Each of us is perplexed as to why human life is so lacking in peace and security. Why are we so frequently faced with such troubles and hardships? Why have our systems and laws gone awry? We are forever seeing nations falling foul of one another, country struggling against country, men tearing one another apart like wolves. Millions of people are being killed, wounded, or displaced by war. Homes are being destroyed, and property and businesses worth billions of pounds are being devastated. The strong are crushing the weak, the rich are exploiting the poor, governments are tyrannical and oppressive, and the so-called guardians of law and order are corrupt and unjust.

The rich man is intoxicated by his wealth and the man in authority is consumed with arrogance. There is no loyalty in friendship, and promises are easily broken. Morals are unknown and godlessness prevails, even under the guise of religion. Man has lost faith in man; humanity is divided into countless groups, parties, tribes, each of which is trying to harm others by force, by fraud, by whatever means it has at its disposal -as if this were the correct way, indeed the only way to conduct one's affairs.

What is the root cause of all these troubles? Beyond the human realm, we find perfect tranquillity. The stars, air, water, trees and animals are at peace, obediently following the laws laid down for them. The rest of creation is running smoothly, showing no sign of indiscipline or disorder; why is human life deprived of this blessing? This is a very important, but

difficult, question. Most people find it deeply disturbing and baffling, but the answer is not so hard to find.

My analysis of the situation, which may give you food for thought, is this: Man is suffering because he has adopted a way of life at variance with truth and reality. Unless he brings his life into line with truth and reality, he will never know peace. This is not so difficult to understand. Imagine, if you were travelling by train, and took the door of the carriage to be just like your own front door. If you stepped out of it, just as you would out of your front door, your delusion would not help you in the least. The carriage door would not turn into your front door, and the ground you fell onto would not turn into your garden path. When you fell from the speeding train, your fate would be inevitable, even if you were to continue to nurse your delusion along with your broken limbs. Similarly, if you persuade yourself that this world is without a Divine Master, or choose to believe in a deity other than the One God, or even declared yourself to be divine, this would not change reality. God would still be the Lord and Master of the Universe, and His vast realms, of which you occupy the smallest part where you live as His subject, would still remain under His control. Only you would have to pay the consequences for the unsound way of life which you adopt because of your delusion, even if you continue to regard it as correct and proper.

It should be clear that God has not been made the Lord and Master of the Universe by any external force. He is the Sovereign of the Universe in His own right, and His Sovereignty does not depend upon your recognition. His Sovereignty depends upon His own strength. He has created you as well as the Universe. The earth, the sun, the moon and the rest of creation, and all the forces in it, are subject to His command. All the things that help to keep you alive are under His control. Your very existence depends entirely on His will. These are hard facts, which you cannot change by any means. You may refuse to recognise them, you may close your eyes to them, you may explain them away in any manner you like, but they will still remain as they are. Your refusal to accept these

realities will make no difference to them whatsoever, but it will have an effect on you.

If you accept these realities, and recognize your own position in the scheme of things, you will be able to order your life accordingly, and live in peace and contentment. If, however, you reject these realities and try to assume a position which you are not really entitled to, you will meet a fate not very different from that of the person who mistakes the door of a railway carriage for his own front door. You will inevitably hurt yourself, you may even lose your life, but the reality will remain unchanged.

What, then, is our proper position in the light of these realities? What is the position of the servant vis-a-vis the master? Is he not duty bound to obey the master's commands, to carry out his wishes, and not to overstep the bounds of his position as a servant? The servant's job is to serve. The subordinate officer's job is to carry out the order of his superiors and not try to assume the position of a general himself. If you own a piece of land or property, you will want to see that it is managed precisely according to your wishes - this is your right. If you lived in a country where all power is concentrated in the hands of a monarch or ruler, what would your position be in relation to his? Surely you would be expected to live peacefully as a law-abiding citizen. If you decided to assume power yourself, would you not be regarded as a rebel and a traitor?

These examples make it clear to us what our position is in the realms of the Universe, where the Sovereign is Almighty God. It is He Who has created us, and our only duty is to live and act in accordance with the will of our Creator. It is He Who sustains and feeds us from His treasury. Our position is that of a servant, and we have no rights beyond that. He is the supreme Sovereign of the whole world, including our own selves, and we can have no other status except that of the subjects of the Sovereign. The heavens and the earth are all His property, and should be administered and managed according to His will. We have no business to try and run the world

according to our own wishes and desires, independent of Him; if we try to do so, we are bound to suffer grievously.

God's sovereignty over the Universe exists by virtue of His own power and authority. The heavens and the earth are all within His power. No human being can claim any other status except that of His subject. His law is the law of the Universe and His command alone is worthy of obedience. None of His subjects has the right to assume for himself the position of a sovereign ruler. No individual or legislative body has the right to make laws according to their whims or desires, and call upon the subjects of God to follow that law rather than the Divine law. No government has the right to enforce its own authority and require people to obey its own commands rather than the Divine injunctions. No individual or group has the right to recognize the rule of any of the pretenders to power in preference to the rule of the True Sovereign, to reject the laws of God and accept those made by human law-makers, to reject the commands of a legitimate ruler, or to obey an illegitimate, self-appointed ruler.

False claims of sovereignty and recognition of these claims all amount to acts of manifest rebellion, and guilty parties are bound to be punished sooner or later. Each and every one of us is under God's control, and He can call any of us back to Him whenever He wills. No-one has the power to escape the reach of His Law. After death, our bodies may be buried, or burnt, or otherwise reduced to "dust" and "ashes", yet we will never escape the long arm of the Divine Law. The entire Universe is under His control, and even if the particles of our bodies are scattered throughout the world, as soon as He wills it, we will be brought before Him and asked: By what right did you claim sovereignty when you were nothing but My subjects and slaves? Who empowered you to enforce your laws in My realms? Why did you recognize the authority of imposters and pretenders when you were My subjects?

Why did you obey illegitimate masters when you were My servants? Why did you give credit to others for providing your

livelihood when in fact it was I Who sustained you and you drew your living from My treasury?

Would you be able to answer these charges? Is there any lawyer, no matter how skilled and persuasive, who could defend you? Could he offer any recommendation to save you from the severe penalty prescribed for such rebellion?

Oppression why?

It is not merely a matter of rights; it is also a question of ability. Is any human individual or group really capable of being a ruler or lawmaker? Even ordinary machinery will be thrown out of gear if it is operated by someone who does not know how to operate it. If you entrust a car to someone who does not know how to drive, you will soon come to grief. If a machine made of cold and lifeless steel and plastic cannot be used without full knowledge of its nature and workings, how can the world of men -this most complicated machine with a myriad of psychological and other facets, each of which may exhibit innumerable difficulties -be controlled and ruled by men, who far from knowing others, do not even know themselves well enough?

When such novices assume the role of law-makers and try to run human life, their fate will most likely resemble that of the car entrusted to the non-driver. It is easy to see that wherever man-made laws have been followed, rather than the laws of God, and wherever the affairs of man have been run by men with disregard for Divine commands, things have not been properly managed and there has been no peace or tranquillity. On the contrary, there is only violence and bloodshed, oppression and injustice, exploitation and degradation. It has become a dog-eat-dog world, where public morality has been shattered and social well-being destroyed. All the powers and faculties with which God created man have been used for destruction rather than welfare and progress. The reason why man has turned this world into a veritable hell is that, like a curious child, he has tried to run a machine about whose

mechanism and working he knows next to nothing. Only the Maker of this machine knows its secrets and the precise manner in which it can be run efficiently. If mankind can persuade itself even now to retrace the steps it has taken on the path to perdition, and start following the laws laid down by the Maker of the human machine, the damage that we have so far done to ourselves can yet be repaired, and our life redeemed. There is no other way out of the troubles and tribulations which we have created for ourselves.

WHY IS THERE SO MUCH INJUSTICE IN THE WORLD?

If you look at this problem a little more deeply, you will find another reason, beside his own ignorance, for mankind's undoing. The word "man" or "mankind" does not refer to any particular individual or tribe or nation. Moreover, these words, in their traditional usage, are taken to refer to women as well as men. All men and women are human beings and have the right to live and obtain the necessities of life; all are entitled to justice, honour and dignity. Human welfare does not entail merely the welfare of any particular individual, tribe, class or nation, but the welfare of all people. When wealth and comfort are enjoyed by the few while the majority languishes amidst hardship and adversity, it cannot be said that mankind is happy and prosperous.

Having accepted this self-evident truth, how may the welfare and prosperity of the whole of mankind be achieved? This goal can only be reached if laws are made for mankind by One Who does not discriminate amongst men. It can be achieved only if the rights of men are justly determined by One Who has no personal stake in the matter, and Who is not associated with the interests of any tribe, family, class, country or nation. It can be achieved only if all are subject to the commands of One Who can neither err in His judgement because of ignorance or inadequate knowledge, nor abuse authority for personal gain, nor take the side of one against another.

This is the only way to establish justice and ensure that all individuals, nations, classes and groups will have equal rights. This is the only way to end oppression, injustice and tyranny. Is there any man on earth who could be so fair, just and selfless? Is there anyone who is so free from human weaknesses? Surely this question cannot be answered in the affirmative. Such perfect fairness and justice are attributes which belong to God alone. Any human being, no matter how fair and big-hearted he may be, will have some personal interests; he is bound to feel closer to some people than others, to be very fond of some and take a dislike to others. Moreover, no human being can claim to be free from weaknesses and shortcomings.

This is the reason why we find oppression and injustice, in one form or another, wherever man-made laws are in force instead of the law of God, and where human authority is obeyed instead of the Divine commands. Think of the various royal families who have secured for themselves by force positions of honour and distinction, fabulous wealth, and a life of pomp and privileges that are denied to others. They are above the law and cannot be sued in court, no matter what they do. They commit manifest errors and yet the fiction is maintained and believed by many that the monarch can do no wrong. It is patently obvious that they are mere mortals like all others, yet they pose as demigods and are placed on a high pedestal, and ordinary folks, if they approach them at all, appear before them with folded hands and on bended knees, as if they depended on the royalty for their livelihood, and even for their very life. The kings and their kinsmen collect money from the people by fair means or foul, and squander it on palaces and carriages, on luxury and sport. The rich people's dogs often eat better food than many human beings, the very people who toil to fill the coffers of the wealthy. Is this justice? Could this scheme of things possibly be the invention of a just sovereign who has equal regard for the rights and interests of all?

Or think of the Brahmins in India, or priests and wealthy princes and nobles in other lands, or of the business magnates and tycoons throughout the world. All of them consider themselves to be above the "common people". They have been able to put many laws on the statute books, in many countries, which grant them rights not available to ordinary people. They are considered to be clean and respectable, while common folk are viewed as dirty and despicable. They are regarded as noble and the others as mean. It is as if their role is to rob and the common people are there just to be robbed.

The life, honour and property of the common people are often sacrificed to keep the privileged classes happy. Could such rules and regulations possibly be the handiwork of a just being? Do they not reflect glaring selfishness and partiality? Or think of history, when powerful states enslaved weaker states by force. Is there any law enacted or resolution passed by them which does not betray selfishness? Everywhere certain nations are claiming that they are superior races; indeed they regard themselves alone as human beings, and regard the members of weaker nations to be inferior races, or even subhuman. They believe themselves to be perfectly justified in sacrificing the interests of others for the sake of their own. All the laws passed by them, or under their influence or pressure, clearly betray this attitude.

These examples are merely hints and brief illustrations. The matter could be dwelt upon at length, but there is no need. It is obvious that man-made laws reflect injustice of one kind or another. On the one hand, they give a few people more than is their right; on the other, they deny millions not only their rights, but even their human dignity. The reason for these injustices is not too hard to find: when a man sits down to decide a matter, his mind and heart will be dominated by his own interests and inclinations, or by those of his family, race, class, tribe or nation. He cannot look at others with the same understanding and sympathy as he shows towards those who are closest to him.

There is no remedy for this prevalent injustice except to scrap man-made laws and accept, unconditionally and without reservation, the law of God in Whose eyes all human beings are equal and Who distinguishes between them on the basis of their piety, virtue, character, conduct and merits, rather than their race, colour, class or nationality.

How can we establish peace?

There is a further aspect of the problem that cannot be ignored. It is evident that, in the ultimate analysis, the sense of responsibility is the only force that can keep a person under restraint. If a person is convinced that there is nobody to call him to account, and that there is no power that can punish him, then he will naturally tend to lose all sense of discipline and lead a life of license and irresponsibility, with no respect or concern for others.

This is as true of families, nations and mankind at large, as it is for individuals. A family will lose control and exceed the limits of responsibility and authority when it finds that there is nobody to question it and bring it to book. A socio-economic class will not hesitate to oppress other classes when it finds that it is not answerable to anybody. When a nation finds that it is strong enough to assert itself with impunity, it sets out to overrun and destroy weaker nations, just as the wolf will attack the sheep.

Much of the disorder that plagues the world today is due primarily to the fact that most people do not recognize the sovereignty of a Being superior to all of them, and that there is a Being to Whom they will all have to answer for their deeds one day, Who has the power to punish them. Unless they come to recognize and believe in such a Being, oppression and injustice will continue, and true peace cannot be established.

Who could this Supreme Being be, but God Almighty, the Lord and Master of the Universe? He could not be any human being, for any individual or group invested with supreme power would become irresponsible and capricious, like a

Pharaoh, acting selfishly and partially, unfairly favouring some over others. "Absolute power corrupts absolutely". Earlier this century, the League of Nations was set up by the European powers to solve the problem of international disorder, but it soon degenerated into an association of White Nations and was used as a tool in the hands of a few Great Powers who began to treat smaller and weaker nations unjustly.*

These and other lessons of history should have taught us that we cannot expect man to provide an ideal power the fear of which can keep all individuals, groups, nations and empires under restraint, and ensure proper conduct at all levels from the individual to the international. Such a power has to be outside, and above, the human world. It can only be the power of God. If we are concerned about our own welfare and progress, there is no alternative for us but to believe in God, submit to His sovereignty, obey His law, and realise that He sees and knows all that we do and think, and that we will one day have to appear before Him to render a full account of our lives on this earth. This is the only way in which we can hope to become good, peaceful and law-abiding men and women. This is the only way in which we can attain peace in this world and salvation in the Hereafter.

A doubt

There remains one more doubt to be dispelled. If God's sovereignty over the Universe is so absolute, if everything from the sub-atomic particles to the mighty heavenly bodies is under His control, and if man is merely a humble subject of the realms of the Almighty, how then is man able to rebel against the Divine sovereign and set up his own dominions in which he rides rough-shod over others through man-made laws? Why does the Almighty not put a stop to it immediately and punish them?

Let us take the example of a country where the ruler posts one of his subjects as the governor of a particular province. The whole country is under the control of the ruler; the citizens

are his subjects, the roads, railways, telecommunications, armed forces and all other means of control are at his disposal; and the province in question is surrounded on all sides by the dominions of the ruler. If he so wished, the ruler could compel the governor by force into complete loyalty and unquestioning obedience, but he wants to test the man's intelligence, loyalty, sense of duty and ability. So he gives the governor free rein in the province to such an extent that the governor ceases to feel the controlling authority and power of the supreme sovereign. If the governor is wise, loyal and dutiful, he will never lose sight of his position as a subject and subordinate of the ruler, and will run his province within the limits of his jurisdiction in accordance with the authority of the sovereign. He will exercise his authority within the framework of the sovereign's commission and according to the latter's wishes. This loyal and dutiful conduct will prove his ability and competence, and he will be in line for promotion to higher positions.

On the other hand, imagine that the governor is foolish, disloyal and wicked, and that the people of the province are ignorant and naive. Taking advantage of the free rein given to him by the sovereign, the governor decides on rebellion. He takes it into his head to rule independently as the lord and master of the province, and the people begin to obey him, because they see that he pays them, he controls the local police and courts, and he has the power to punish and execute, and to make or break the lives of people in the province. The sovereign is aware of the treason committed by the rebellious governor, and of its acceptance by the short-sighted local populace.

He is surely powerful enough to put an end to the rebellion and inflict a severe punishment on the guilty parties, but he does not do so. He wants to put the governor and people to a thorough test. He continues to give them free rein, and looks on as they pursue their disastrous course. He wants all their evil to be fully expressed. He enjoys absolute power, and has no fear that the rebellious governor may eventually march on the capital and overthrow him. He is certain that the rebels

would never be able to leave their province, which is surrounded by loyal territory. He is, therefore, in no hurry to force the issue. He can continue tolerate the situation for years on end. But ultimately, when all the evil latent in the offending governor and people has fully manifested itself, he swoops on them and his punishment is so severe that no stratagem on their part can avert it.

Each and every one of us, from the rulers and men in authority to the humblest peasants and slum-dwellers, is on trial. Our intelligence and wisdom, our sense of duty, our integrity and loyalty, are being put to a severe test. Each of us has to decide whether he wants to be loyal or disloyal to the real Lord. This is the most vital question, the most important issue in life. Success or failure depends on this alone. Let each of us engage in some deep and sincere soul-searching. Have we really chosen to be loyal to our Lord, or are we following the road that leads to disloyalty, betrayal, and ultimate disaster?

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THE REAL PROBLEM
&
THE REAL SOLUTION

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[This article was read before a meeting on February 23, 1941, at the invitation of the 'Majlis-e-Islamiat', Islamia College, Peshawar]

The Relationship between Concept and Conduct

Man faces many things in life and he cannot deal properly with any of them unless he forms a concept about the nature of the particular thing he is faced with and his own relationship to it. Right or wrong, a concept has to be formed about everything and until a concept is formed no man can decide about what he should do and what attitude he should adopt towards a particular thing. This experience forms a part of everyone's daily life. Whenever you meet a person you need to know who he is, about his position and status, his personal qualities, and the kind of relationship that exists between the two of you. You cannot determine how to deal with him until these questions have been answered.

In the absence of any information, you still have to form a conjectural opinion on the basis of appearances and whatever conduct you adopt towards him is dictated by the opinion you have formed. You eat those sort of things which according to your knowledge or conjecture have food value. The things you throw away or make use of; the things you adore or loathe; the things you fear or love – varying attitude towards all these things is regulated by the opinion which you have formed

about their nature and properties and your relationship with them.

The correctness or impropriety of your behaviour towards these things is dependent upon the right or wrong opinions you have formed about them. The validity or invalidity of what you do depends on whether you have formed your opinion about them on the basis of knowledge or from conjecture or from empirical observation. A child, for instance, sees fire and on the basis of plain observation forms the opinion that it is an attractive, glittering plaything. This opinion leads it to stretch out its hands to catch hold of the fire. Another man sees the same fire and through conjecture comes to the conclusion that it embodies in itself some attribute of Divinity or, at least, is an emblem of Divinity. On the basis of this conclusion, he determines to bow his head in prayer before the fire, thus signifying his relationship to it. A third man looks at the fire. He begins to investigate into its nature and properties and through knowledge and research arrives at the conclusion that fire can bake, burn or heat things. He further forms the concept that his relationship with fire is like that of master with his servant. Fire, in his opinion, is neither a plaything nor a deity. It is a thing which can be pressed into service for cooking, burning or heating purposes, whenever the need arises.

Among the foregoing different attitudes, those of the child and the fire-worshipper are definitely based on ignorance. Experience negates the child's opinion that fire is a plaything. The concept of the worshipper of fire that fire is God or an emblem of godhood is based upon whim and caprice rather than on any proof furnished by true knowledge. In contrast to both these opinions, the attitude of the man who regards fire as a useful agent in the service of man is a scientific attitude as it is based upon firm knowledge.

THE BASIC PROBLEMS OF LIFE

Keeping this premise in mind let us turn our attention to some fundamental questions. Man finds himself living on this planet. He possesses a body which is endowed with diverse possibilities. A magnificent expanse of earth and sky lies before him. This universe contains an endless variety of things and man has the power to press all these things into his service. Man is surrounded by countless millions of other human beings, animals, plants and minerals and his life is inextricably linked with all of them.

Given this, how it possible to imagine that man could adopt a mode of dealing with these things first forming an opinion about his own self, the nature of the things which surround him and the position in which he stands in relation to them? Is it possible for a person to adopt a way of life without determining who he is and what he is; whether he is responsible or irresponsible; whether he is independent or subordinate to someone else? If he is in a subordinate position, who is his superior, and if he is responsible to whom is he accountable? Has this worldly existence any purpose, and if it has, what is it?

Similarly, can a person propose to use the powers with which he has been endowed without first deciding whether these powers belong to him or are a gift from someone else? Is he going to be called to account for the way he uses his powers? Is the use of his powers to be regulated by himself or by someone else? In the same way, is it possible for a man to adopt a particular kind of behaviour towards the things which from part of his surroundings without ascertaining whether he himself is their master or someone else? Does he have unlimited power over them or are his powers restricted? If his powers are confined within bounds who sets the limits?

Likewise, can a man devise a mode of behaviour towards his fellow men without first forming a definite opinion as to what constitutes the ideals of human society? What is the basis

of distinction and disparity between man and man? What are the motive forces underlying friendship and animosity, harmony and discord, co-operation and non-cooperation? Similarly is it likely that a man can adopt an attitude towards the universe as a whole until he arrives at certain definite conclusions about the nature of the organisation of the universe and his own position as a part of this organisation?

On the basis of the premises I have already discussed, it can be stated without hesitation that it is impossible to adopt any real attitude without first forming a concept about all these matters. In fact, every living man, consciously or sub-consciously, holds certain opinions-indeed is constrained to hold certain opinions – about these essential questions of life; for without such an opinion he would not be able to move even a single step in this universe. It is not necessary for every man to have deliberated in a philosophical manner upon all these questions and to have arrived at particular conclusions about each and every matter after detailed investigation. Most men, indeed, have no definite idea of these questions, nor do they consciously exercise their minds in thinking about them. Despite this, however, all men do form some sort of negative or positive opinion about all these things and the attitude of every man towards life is inevitable controlled by the opinion he has formed.

The Identical Nature of the Bases of Individual and collective Behaviour

As this rule holds good in the case of individuals, so it is also true in respect of groups. These questions lie at the root of human life and unless matters relating to these questions have been clearly thought out, it is impossible to frame a programme for the body politic and construct a culture and civilization. The moral code of a society will reflect whatever conclusions have been reached concerning these vital questions of life; the concept of morality in any society will inevitably be shaped in accordance with them. The various institutions of that society

will be modelled on these same conclusions, indeed the whole fabric of society will be moulded by them.

There can, in fact, be no two opinions on this matter. The attitude of an individual or a society will be determined by the nature of the conclusions arrived at in answer to the questions we have outlined. If you wish, you may analyse the attitude of any individual or society and very easily ascertain their conclusions about life's basic questions since they provide the motive force for their existence. It is quite impossible for individual or collective behaviour to be at variance with the nature of the conclusions reached in answer to these questions. Words and actions may disagree but the nature of the conclusions that dwell in the inner self of a man cannot conflict in any case with the nature of his practical behaviour.

DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE

Let us take a step further. All the fundamental problems of life, whose solution is imperative for man's active existence, are in essence metaphysical. The answer to these questions is not written on the horizon for every man to read when he arrives in this world, nor is the answer self-evident in such a way that everyone can easily comprehend it. This is the reason that there is no single solution upon which all men agree. Men have always held divergent opinions on these questions and various men have found various solutions to them. The question which now presents itself is what the possible solutions to these problems are, what means have been adopted to solve them, and what actual solutions emerge out of all these means.

1. One way of solving these problems is to rely solely upon sense-perception, saying that opinion about all matters should be formed on the basis of sense-perception and observation alone.

2. The second way is to come to a conclusion by means of sense-perception aided by speculation.
3. The third is to put one's faith in the solutions to these problems offered by the Prophets of God who claimed to possess direct knowledge of the Truth.

So far, only the above three means of arriving at a solution to these problems have been made use of and probably only these three ways are possible.

In each of the above cases, different solutions have been found by different means. Each solution gives rise to a particular attitude of mind and a particular parttern of morality and type of culture, which in its basic characteristics is completely different from the attitudes produced by the other solutions. Let me now show you the different solutions to these problems arrived at through these different means and the attitude of mind produced by each solution.

FIRST SOLUTION

When people arrive at a solution in relation to these problems through exclusive reliance upon their own sense-perception then they, in a manner quite natural to this mode of thought, conclude that this entire universe is the result of mere chance. There is no cause or purpose behind it. It has come into being by itself; it is operating automatically; it will come to an end without producing any consequences. There is nothing in control of the universe, and if there were anything at all, its connection with man's life would be non-existent. Man is a species of animal, whose birth is only accidental. We only know that man exists on this planet called Earth. He entertains certain desires and there are some inner urges which compel him to fulfil these desires. Man is equipped with limbs and organs by means of which he satisfies these wants. Around him, on the face of the earth, there are countless sources of provision and by using his limbs and organs man can satisfy himself by means of these things. Hence there is no other use

of the powers of man than the satisfaction of his desires and the fulfilment of his bodily needs to the optimum degree.

The world is no more than a tray on which booty is arrayed for man to lay his hands on. There is no sovereign being over man to whom he is accountable; no spring of knowledge, no source of guidance from which man may derive laws for regulating his life. Hence man is an autonomous being, responsible to no-one. It is his own function to make laws and regulations, to devise means for using his powers and to determine his behaviour towards the things existing around him. If man is in need of any guidance, he should resort to the laws governing the behaviour of animals, the stories hidden in the stones and the experience of his own history.

Man is either accountable to himself alone or to the human authority which the society of men has given to itself. The present worldly life is the only life there is and the consequences of all actions are confined to this world alone. Hence judgement as to what is right or wrong, useful or harmful, good or pernicious, and what is to be adopted or rejected is based on the effects of actions produced in this world.

This is a complete ideology dealing with the fundamental problems of life on the basis of sensory observation. There is a logical link and an intrinsic compatibility between each train of thought contained in this ideology. A person, therefore, who believes in this dogma can adopt a fairly smooth and consistent attitude to life whether or not this dogma and the attitude produced by it are right or wrong. Now let us look at the type of conduct adopted by a person on the basis of this answer.

Conduct based on Sheer Sensory Experience

An inevitable consequence of this viewpoint of human life is that the entire range of human conduct should be unfettered and devoid of any sense of responsibility. Man will deem himself the sole master of his body and his physical powers. He will, therefore, use his physical powers and the qualities of

his head and heart according to his own whims and caprices. He will treat all things and all men whom chance places under his power as his chattels and will feel himself their master. Only the bounds of natural law and the inevitable restrictions imposed by collective life will set a limit to his authority. His own soul will be devoid of any real moral sense – a sense of responsibility and fear of accountability – and no moral force will check his contumacious action.

Where there are no external restraints upon his action or where he is able to bypass these checks, the natural tendency of this belief-system will impel him to be tyrannical, dishonest, wicked and mischievous. He will temperamentally be selfish, materialist and self-seeking. The satisfaction of his carnal desires and animal needs wil be the be-all and end-all of his life. The only things to hold value in his eyes will be those things which prove serviceable to him in the attainment of his desires. It is natural and quite logical that the believers in this dogma should bear such a character and personality.

There is no doubt, however, that for the sake of expediency and far-sightedness such a person may show traits of sympathy and selflessness. He may spare no pains in the task of national welfare and progress. He may in fact display some sense of responsibility and respect for moral principles. But on a careful observation of his conduct you will find that all his seeming virtues are mere extensions of his selfish motives and carnal desires. He looks at the welfare of his nation or country from purely personal motives: he seeks his own welfare through the betterment of his nation and country. For these reasons, such a man can at best be called a nationalist only.

Characteristics of the Society built upon this Conduct

The distinctive feature of any society fashioned by individuals bearing these characteristics and personalities will be easily recognisable.

The basic principles of its political system will be that sovereignty is vested in human beings: an individual, a family, a class, or the common people. The loftiest collective ideal considered feasible will be that of setting up a commonwealth. This state will be governed by man-made laws. All its laws will be made or amended according to human desires and the experience of arbitrary circumstances. Policies, too, will be formulated and altered in deference to the profit motive or personal expediency. In such a state people who are stronger and excel others in cleverness, craftiness, lies, perfidy, callousness and wickedness will gain ascendancy by force. The leadership of the society and the reins of authority will be in the hands of these people. Their constitution will enshrine the principle:

"Might is right and the weak are always wrong."

The whole edifice of society and culture will be raised on the foundations of self-interest. Increasing permissiveness in the satisfaction of simple lust will become the rule, and standards of morality will be such that maximum freedom for the attainment of sensual pleasures is guaranteed to everyone.

Art and literature will be affected by this philosophy of life and will progressively reflect nudity and pornographic trends.

In the economic domain, sometimes feudalism will hold way; at other times capitalism will gain ascendancy; and sometimes the working classes will establish the dictatorship of the proletariat by violent means. Equity, however, will not form part of any of these economic systems. The conduct of every individual in this society will be dictated by the fundamental conviction that the world and all the wealth contained in it is a body and all men are free to lay their hands on it at will and whenever the chance presents itself.

The education system set up for the training of the members of this society will be based on this philosophy of life and will inevitably reflect the same mental attitudes. This system of education will impart to each successive generation

the same notion of the world and man's place in the world which I explained earlier. In all fields of knowledge information will be so arranged and presented as to inculcate in the minds of the rising generation the same theories of existence.

The entire training programme will be designed to produce individuals who will adopt this same attitude to life and will completely assimilate into this type of society. I need to say no more to you about the characteristics of this type of educational system as you have had personal experience of such a system.

The attitude of mind I have just analysed springs out of sheer ignorance. This attitude is similar to that childlike state of mind which, relying upon sensory observation, considers fire as an attractive plaything. There is one difference, however. The fallacy of the child's observation soon becomes apparent through experience. The fire which the child takes as a plaything and wants to hold in his hands is a hot substance. So as soon as it touches the hand, it reveals that it is definitely no longer a plaything. On the other hand, in the other case, the fallacy of observation only becomes manifest after a long time. Indeed most people remain blissfully ignorant of it. The fire which these people hold in their hands has low heat; it does not burn instantly; it simmers on for centuries. However, if a person wishes to learn from common experience, he should ponder that, due to this attitude of mind, the individuals in this kind of society are constantly committing fraud, the rulers are oppressive and tyrannical, the judges are unfair, the rich are covetous and the common people are depraved. This, indeed is a bitter experience for a man and, over and above this, the burning flames of nationalism, imperialism, war and confrontation, invasions and other monstrous acts stemming from the same attitude of mind may force him to conclude that it is based on sheer ignorance rather than on true knowledge of reality. The opinion about the organisation of the universe and man's own position in it which lies at the root this attitude of mind is not consistent with reality, or else it could never have entailed such horrible consequences.

THE SECOND SOLUTION

Let us examine now the second method. The second method of solving the fundamental problems of life is to combine observation with conjecture and speculation and to arrive at solutions to life's problems through these means. Three different trends of thought arise from this method and each trend of thought produces a particular type of behaviour.

(1) POLYTHEISM

One school of thought believes that the universe is certainly subject to divine control, but that there is not one God, but many. Different forces in the universe are being operated by the hands of different deities. Man's prosperity or misfortune, success or failure, profit or loss depends on the kindness or displeasure of a plurality of gods. The protagonists of this viewpoint have also made an attempt on the basis of their conjectures and speculations to identify these divine powers and those in whom these powers are vested. They have set up those things as gods which have caught their fancy.

Characteristics of Polytheistic Behaviour

The distinctive features of the type of human behaviour which flows out from this viewpoint are quite distinctive.

A Life full of Superstitions

In the first place, a man's whole life becomes plagued by superstitions. He believes that there are many things which exert a good or bad influence on his fortune through supernatural means. He arrives at this conclusion on the basis of subjective thinking: his belief is not supported by any proof or knowledge. The devotee of this faith, therefore, dissipates most of his energy in entertaining false hopes of good fortune or in imaginary fears of ill-luck. Sometimes, he pins his hopes upon some tomb for the accomplishment of his desires; sometimes he trusts that an idol will turn the wheel of his fortunes to a better end; sometimes he exerts himself to the

utmost to propitiate some imaginary god; he feels crest-fallen on seeing a bad omen; sometimes he starts building castles in the air on the appearance of what he considers a good omen. All these things deflect his ideas and endeavours from a natural course and set him on an utterly unnatural course of action.

Endless Cycles of Rituals

Secondly, this viewpoint establishes a lengthy hotch-potch of worship, devotion, offerings, supplications and other rituals. Caught up in this complex web a large part of a man's efforts and activites goes to waste.

Frauds committed by Impostors

Thirdly, the protagonists of this philosophy of polytheism and superstition fall an easy prey to the wily tricks of fraudulent men. A man sets himself up as a king and claims descent from the sun, the moon and other gods. He thus makes the people believe that he is a god too and that the people are his bondmen. Someone becomes an attendant at a shrine or a temple and sets himself up as an intermediary between the people and some supernatural power who rules over the destinies of mankind. Someone becomes a "Pundit" or a "*Pir*" (a saint) and by the stratagem of amulets, charms, sorcery and the practice of magic, hood-winks the people into believing that through these supernatural means all their desires can be obtained. The progeny of these tricksters form themselves into hereditary family groups and classes whose rights, privileges and influences continue to grow and become entrenched with the progress of time. This belief, therefore, thrusts upon the necks of the people the yoke of slavery to royal families, religious functionaries and spiritual guides.

A Life of Errors

Fourthly, this doctrine provides no enduring base for knowledge, art, philosophy, literature, culture, or politics, nor do men receive from these imaginary deities any guidelines

which may be followed in daily life. Man's connection with these gods is limited to the performance of a few religious rituals with the main object of soliciting their favour and support. But as far as the practical affairs of life are concerned, man is left to himself to frame laws and regulations and devise codes of conduct. Hence a society which believes in a plurality of gods follows virtually the same path I described earlier in connection with the society which is guided by a faith based on ignorance. The rules of morality, code of conduct, culture, politics, economic system, knowledge and literature are almost the same in both societies. There is, therefore, no difference in principle between doctrines based on ignorance or faith in polytheism.

(2) ASCETICISM

The second doctrine produced by combining observation with conjecture and speculation lays down that the world is a place of torment; and that physical existence means being constantly subject to pain and torture. The soul is incarcerated in the body of man like a condemned prisoner. All sensations of pleasure, desires and physical needs which are the natural consequences of worldly existence are, in fact, yokes and fetters by which man is enchained. The more man craves for the world and its things, the tighter grows the grip of these chains and severer the torment that lies in store for him. Salvation lies in renouncing all connection with the affairs of the world. It is necessary to strangle all desires, abstain from all pleasure, deny all physical needs and the demands of passion, purify the heart of all affections born out of kinship of flesh and blood, and put this enemy (i.e. one's body and passions) through a severe trial of torture and hardship so that the soul is freed from the dominance of the body. In this way, the soul will become light and refined and will gain sufficient strength to soar in a state of 'Nirvana' to salvation.

This doctrine of asceticism produces certain characteristic features of human behaviour.

Individualism Instead of Collectivism

In the first place, this doctrine changes all human tendencies from collectivism to individualism and from civilised culture to a life in the wilderness. Man turns his face from the world and flees from all responsibilities. Non-cooperation and renunciation of all personal relationships becomes the hallmark of his life. In short, he adopts negative moral values.

Good Men become Hermits

Secondly, this doctrine impels good men to renounce the world and go into seclusion in order to attain salvation. This paves the way for wicked men to take into their own hands the reins of authority in all worldly matters.

Fodder for Tyrants

Thirdly, with the penetration of this doctrine into a society its people begin to adopt a negative kind of moral value. They exhibit unsocial and individualistic tendencies and become psychopaths. Their creative powers are sapped. They become easy meat for tyrants and it is easy for a despotic government to coerce them into obedience. In fact, this doctrine works like magic in taming the common people to become the willing slaves of tyrants.

Conflict with Human Nature

Fourthly, a constant conflict rages between human nature and this doctrine of asceticism and the latter has always to capitulate. When it suffers a setback, the ascetic doctrine seeks refuge in pretences and as an end result, the ritual of penance is invented; the stratagem of allegorical love is employed; and finally, under the cloak of renunciation the protagonists of this belief in fact display a love for the world which would put even the most covetous lovers of the world to shame.

(3) PANTHEISM

The third viewpoint which emerges out of a combination of observation and conjecture holds that man and universe are unreal. They have no real existence of their own. In fact, there is one Being who has created all these things as a manifestation of Himself and this same Being is working inside them. If we go into details we shall find that there are many ramifications and myriad aspects to this doctrine; yet there is one strand of thought that runs through all of them: all things are mere shadows of one single Being; only this Being exists, all else is illusory.

The doctrine inculcates an attitude in man of doubting the reality of his own existence; he loses all initiative; he considers himself a mere puppet made to dance by someone else or perhaps some external spirit is dancing within it; he forgets himself in the haze of his illusions; his life is rudderless and has no set course or purpose. The train of his thought runs like this: I am only a shadow; no work has been assigned to me; nor can I accomplish anything by myself. That All pervading Being which will hold away from the beginning to the end of the world is the Mover. Everything is accomplished by that Being alone. If that Being is perfect, I also am perfect. Why then should I act? If that Being is endeavouring towards perfection and is heading towards its climax, taking the whole universe in its stride, then as a shadow I shall automatically move along with this Being. I am only a part; it is not for me to know whether the whole is moving or where it intends to go.

The practical consequences of this doctrine are nearly similar to those which I have already described in the course of the discussion of the doctrine of asceticism. In certain respects the attitude of the devotees of this belief are akin to those of the protagonists of the doctrine of ignorance. The man who believes himself to be a mere shadow succumbs to his passions, giving free rein to them and not caring in what direction they take him, for according to his way of thinking, it is the universal substance which is the prime mover of his passions and he himself is only a puppet.

These three concepts, like the first one, are in fact based on ignorance and the kind of human behaviour which flows out from them is also characterised by ignorance. None of the above concepts is substantiated by proofs based on knowledge. As a matter of fact, they constitute a variety of concepts formulated on illusory and conceptual grounds. Experience denies their validity. If any one of these doctrines were valid, its practice would not have entailed bad consequences. If you observe that whenever and wherever it is eaten, a particular thing causes pain in the stomach you rightly infer from this that the thing in question does not agree with the anatomy and temper of the human digestive system. In the same manner, when it is an established fact that the doctrines of polytheism, asceticism and pantheism have by and large caused mischief to humanity, it is a positive proof that none of these doctrines is compatible with Reality and, on this basis, all are invalid.

THE THIRD SOLUTION – ISLAM

Let us turn to the third course of action which is the last report in formulating a viewpoint about the basic problems of life. This course of action is to put our faith in the solution to these problems offered to us by the Prophets of God. The matter may be explained by taking the example of a man who finds himself in a strange land. He has absolutely no acquaintance with the land he is in. He therefore seeks information from one of its people and goes around the land under his guidance.

Whenever you are confronted with a problem of this nature you first of all search out a man who claims to know the way. Your second concern is to satisfy yourself about the reliability of the guide you have found on the basis of circumstantial evidence. Finally, taking him as your guide, you set out on your journey. When it is established by experience that the information provided by him has not misled you, you are convinced that your guide possesses the requisite knowledge and that the information supplied by him about that place is true. This is a scientific method. In the absence of any

other scientific method, this one is surely the only correct method of formulating your viewpoint.

Now look! The fact is that the world is a strange place for you. You have no knowledge about its reality. You do not know how the world is regulated. You are not aware under what system of laws this great 'workshop' is operating. What is your own position in this world? And what is the proper attitude you should adopt towards it? These are the questions whose answers you are seeking. In the first place, you conceived the opinion that only what is visible is real. You acted according to this viewpoint but the result was a fiasco. Subsequently, you formed various opinions on the basis of conjecture and supposition and acted upon each of them, but in every case the experience was negative. After all this, the only course left to obtain true guidance is to turn to the Prophets of God.

The Prophets claim to possess true knowledge. After inquiring deeply into the way they lived, it is revealed that they were without exception truthful, trustworthy, pious, selfless and sound-minded beyond any shadow of doubt. There are clearly sufficient grounds for believing in the truth of their claims. It remains to be determined, however, how far their information regarding this world and man's position in it is valid and whether or not any practical evidence is forthcoming which gives the lie to their claims. Further, how far has the information supplied by them been successfully applied in actual experience? If upon scrutiny the outcome of all these inquiries is in favour of the Prophets, we should put our trust in their guidance and adopt only that course in life which is in accordance with their instructions.

As I said earlier, in contrast to other methods based on ignorance, the basis of this method is scientific. If a man bows his head in compliance to this knowledge; If he gives up obstinacy and conceit and acts according to this knowledge; and if he limits his actions within the bounds fixed by this knowledge, he has set out on the road to success. It is this method which is termed the "Islamic Method".

THE VIEWPOINT OF THE PROPHETS CONCERNING MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

The Prophetic teaching provides us with a series of concepts regarding man and the universe.

Sovereignty Lies with God

This whole universe stretching out before us, of which we are a part, is not an accidental phenomenon. It is a well-organised and well-regulated system which God has created and of which He alone is the Master and Sole Ruler. It is, in fact, a totalitarian system in which all powers are vested in a Central Authority. No-one else shares in the rule of this Totalitarian Sovereign. All forces which operate within the system of this universe are under His direct control. Nothing in the universe dares to disobey His Commands or act on its own accord without His permission. No part of this All-Embracing system can attain independence and naturally should not have autonomy or be irresponsible.

Subservience of Man

Man is born a subject of this Divine State. Man does not become a subject of this state in his physical being by choice; he is born a subject and it does not lie in his power to hold any other status than that of a subject. Man, therefore, has no right to devise a way of life or to define his own obligations. Man does not own anything in this universe and he has no right to make laws for the use of property which does not belong to him. Man's body and all his faculties are in reality the possession of God and His gift. Hence the right to use his body or physical powers according to his own will is not vested in man. On the other hand, man should use these Divine gifts according to the Will of the Almighty.

Similarly, all things – earth, animals, water, plants, minerals – which form the environment of man are the property of God. They do not belong to man. Hence he has no

right to appropriate even these things according to his own will. Man should deal with these things according to the rules set by their Master to Whom they really belong. Similarly, all men who inhabit this earth and whose lives are interlinked with each other are the subjects of God. Therefore, they have no right to formulate rules and regulations for ordering their mutual relations.

As regards the question of what the law of God is, the Prophets inform us that the same source from which they received knowledge about the reality of this world and about our own selves has conveyed to them the knowledge of the Divine Law. God Himself revealed this knowledge to them and appointed them to deliver this knowledge to us. It is for us to trust in them and recognise them as the envoy of our true King and receive from them the authentic law of the King.

Limits of Action

The Prophets further explain to us, "You can observe that the entire business of this universe is running according to a system; yet the Emperor is not visible, nor do we see His functionaries at work. You have a sense of freedom and feel free to act according to your wishes; you may behave as if you are the owner of things; you may even bow your heads in subservience and obedience to others who impose themselves as masters; you receive sustenance under all circumstances; you are provided with means of work; disobedience of Divine law does not entail immediate punishment. All this is meant to put you to the test. The Master has endowed you with wisdom, the faculty of deduction and the power of choice between right or wrong.

"The Master has also thrown a veil between His Being – His Dominion – and your own eyes. He wants to put you through a trial and see how you use the powers He has bestowed on you He has blessed you with common sense, freedom of choice, and a measure of autonomy and has left you to act as you desire. If you realise your position as a subject

and adopt this position with heart and soul without coercion, you will come out successful in the test of your Master has given you.

"On the other hand, if you fail to realise your status as the subject of God or having recognised your position as subject, you adopt a rebellious course, you will have failed the test. You have been vested with some powers in the world in order that you may be put through a trial. You have been given control and authority over many things in the world and have been granted a whole life-span to prove your worth."

The World is a Place of Trial

The Prophets then inform us that this worldly life is a period of trial; accordingly no accounts shall be called for nor any reward or punishment be dispensed in this world.[1]

Whatever is given here is not necessarily a reward for virtue; it does not signify that God is pleased with you or that He approves of your present deeds. All this is, in fact, given to you as a means of putting you to the test. Goods, wealth, children, Government positions, means of livelihood – all these

[1] The world in which we live is a 'Physical World' (one which runs on the laws of physical science) and not a 'Moral World' (one which runs on moral laws). Hence under the existing system of the universe, the moral consequences of human actions do not develop fully. They can develop only to the extent to which physical limitations permit them to develop. In other words where the laws of physical existence put up an obstruction, it is impossible for moral consequences to develop. Take an instance. A man kills another person. The moral consequences of a murder will develop only if physical laws lend assistance in investigating the crime, establishing the charge and then enforcing the moral punishment on the culprit. If the physical laws prove abortive, no moral consequences of the murder will ensue. Even if the physical laws do help, the moral consequences of the crime of murder will never fully develop in this world. The mere killing of a person for the person killed does not fulfil the requirements of laws of morality. Hence this world is not a place of punishment; nor can it be so. In order to make this world a 'Place of reward or Punishment' we would need a system of the universe which, in contrast to the present system, was ruled by moral laws and in which physical laws serve as aids to the fulfilment of the former.

are bestowed on you in order to test your performance and to enable you to make use of your good or bad qualities. Similarly, all hardships, losses, calamites which overtake you do not necessarily signify the visitation of God's punishment on you for some evil deed. Some of these afflictions are results of certain natural phenomena.

For instance, when an adulterer suffers a venereal disease, it is a physical consequence of his action and not a moral punishment for his evil deed. If he succeeds in getting rid of the disease with medical treatment, he might escape the physical pain of the disease, but will not be exempted from moral punishment. If he repents of his sin, he will be redeemed from moral punishment but this alone will not cure his physical illness.

Some of these hardships fall under the category of trials.

For instance, when a man is afflicted with poverty it is, in fact, a test of his integrity. Is he tempted to use foul means to earn his livelihood or does he remain steadfast in using legitimate means? Does he keep firm in righteousness when oppressed by a multitude of hardships or does he waver and succumb to evil ways?

Some misfortunes occur when one behaves in accordance with a viewpoint which is opposed to reality. In such a case one inevitably suffers a rude shock.

When a man denies the dominion of God over this world and behaves as if he were free from all restraints, he is acting against reality and inevitably comes to grief, for in point of fact God does exist and man is not free from all restraints. The behaviour of such a man may be compared to the example of a person who, taking fire as a plaything, tries to hold it and burns his hands, for his action is certainly opposed to the hard facts.

In any case, this world is not a 'House of Reward or Punishment'; it is a 'House of Trial'. The consequences of actions which appear in this world cannot be taken as a basis for judging whether a method or an action is righteous or wicked, good or bad and unlawful or permissible. The

consequences of worldly actions as they will be established in the Next World will form the real basis of judgement. When the period of grace (the present life) is over, a second life will start in which your deeds will be assessed and judgement will be delivered as to whether you acquitted yourself with credit or ignominiously in your worldly life. The only basis on which you will be judged guilty or not guilty in the next world will be whether firstly, you employed your faculties of observation and reason in the right way and acknowledged the sovereignty of God and the Divine sanction of His commands; secondly, whether you, having recognised the above reality and possessing also freedom of choice, submitted to the sovereign Lord of the universe and acted on His commands without coercion and of your own accord.

SCRUTINY OF THE ISLAMIC VIEWPOINT

A Scientific Concept

The conception of the world and man propounded by the Prophets is perfect. All parts of the viewpoint are logically woven together; there are no linner contradictions in it. It contains the most perfect interpretation of all the events of the world and fully explains the entire phenomenon of the universe. There is nothing relating to the observation or experience of man which cannot be interpreted in the light of this conception. Hence it is a scientific doctrine and is valid by all definitions of the word 'scientific'. Again no observation or experience has ever been able to explode the validity of this doctrine. Hence it still holds good. It cannot be included among the exploded myths.

If the theories of a particular age refuse to acknowledge the validity of a concept, it does not prove that the concept is false. A scientific doctrine can be proved wrong only by facts and not by theories alone. Hence until it is established that the concept of man and the universe presented by the Prophets has been proved wrong by demonstrable facts, it would be quite

unscientific and malicious to regard the viewpoint of the Prophets an exploded myth.

Our observation of the system of the universe also makes this viewpoint appear the most probable. The phenomenon of the marvellous organisation of the universe forces us to the conclusion that it is more rational to believe in the existence of a Supreme Administrator than to deny His existence. Similarly, on the evidence of this vast organisation of the universe, it is much more reasonable to conclude that it is a centralised system and that a Single All-Powerful Authority controls it rather than to infer that the universe is a decentralised system which is ruled over by several different authorities. In the same manner, upon observing the grand wisdom working behind the glorious management of this universe, it is more rational to infer that the system of the universe is constructed according to a wise design and purpose, and on the same evidence it appears far from reasonable to believe that it is mere chance.

Again when we carefully consider the fact that the system of this universe constitutes a State and man forms a part of this state, it appears quite reasonable to believe that there should be no provision for the independence or unaccountability of man within it. Man's true status is that of a subject. On these grounds this viewpoint appears to us the most reasonable

A Practicable Creed

Looked at from the practical angle this viewpoint appears feasible too. A whole scheme of life complete in every detail emerges out of this creed. Philosophy and ethics, science and crafts, literature and art, politics and system of government in peace and war, international relations – this creed takes care of every aspect of life and all its needs. There is not a single area of life in which a person need look outside of this creed for guidance.

THE IMPACT OF ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY

We have now to observe what sort of attitude to life is engendered by the Islamic ideology and what its consequences are.

Impact on Individual Life

In contrast to other doctrines based on ignorance, the Islamic creed builds up a responsible and disciplined attitude to life among its adherents. Faith in the doctrine of Islam implies a man not considering himself the master of his body, physical powers or anything in the world and also not considering himself free to use them at will Rather these things should be seen as the property of God and made use of in conformity with Divine Law.

A man should take his possessions as a trust from God and while using them, should never forget that he has to render full account for their use to a Supreme Authority from whose sight not a single action is hidden and Who is aware of even the innermost secrets of every individual. A man who gives his allegiance to Islam will abide by a code of rules under all circumstances. He will never let his passions go berserk like an untamed beast. He will never become a tyrant or a corrupt person. His integrity is beyond question and he is trustworthy. There is no need of external pressure to coerce him into obeying the laws. His inner self becomes subservient to a Supreme Moral Discipline which keeps him steady on the path of righteousness and equity even under circumstances when there is no risk of being found out. It is impossible to imagine any better means of producing individuals of such impeccable and dependable character than the fear of Divine retribution and a realisation that all things in man's possession are a trust from God.

Moreover, this view of life not only transforms an individual into a man of action but also diverts his efforts from the attainment of purely selfish, sensual, or nationalistic ends towards achieving the lofty aims of justice and morality. It is

impossible to find a more dynamic, more productive kind of man and one more righteous in action than the one who knows that he has not been sent unto the world without any aim, that God has created him to discharge a particular duty and that the aim of his life is to perform deeds that please God rather than merely living to please himself and his family. He knows that he will have to account completely as to how and to what end he expended his time and energy.

Islam produces individuals of such excellence that it is difficult to imagine that any other viewpoint could inculcate a better sense of values among its individual devotees.

The Impact of Islam on Collective Life

Let us now analyse the impact of the Islamic viewpoint on the collective life of mankind. In the first place, the Islamic faith changes the foundations of human society. According to it all people are the subjects of God. Hence all enjoy equal rights, equal status, and equal opportunities. No individual family, class, nation or race has any superior or preferential rights or rights of dominance over other people. In this way the concept of man's dominance or superiority over other men is rooted out, and all evils rising out of monarchy, feudalism, aristocracy, Brahmanism, Papal rule and dictatorship are instantly dispensed with.

The doctrine of Islam also removes all prejudices of tribe, nation, race, country and colour which have always been the major cause of bloodshed in the world. According to the Islamic faith, the whole earth is the property of God. All men are the progeny of Adam and creatures of God. Merit is attained by virtue of purity of morals and fear of God and not on account of race, genealogy, goods, wealth or the shade of skin. Distinction is conferred on those who fear God most and practise piety and are concerned with the ennoblement of their souls.

Similarly, the Islamic viewpoint completely alters the basis of social ties and relationships, and the differences or

distinctions between man and man. Wherever man-made principles form the basis of collective social life, they result in social conflict, divide people into disparate groups and raise insurmountable barriers between these groups. Differences of race, country, nationality or colour cannot be overcome by man-made systems nor do they permit of social mobility from one section of mankind to another. In contrast to this, the Islamic viewpoint establishes the basis of social life upon the secure foundations of firm belief in God and obedience to His commands.

Those who stop bowing down to creatures and bow their heads before the Creator and acknowledge the Divine Law as the governing principle in their lives, all these constitute one community. Those who act otherwise form a separate community. In this way, all differences are levelled, save one. And even this difference is not insurmountable. It is possible at all times for a person to change his convictions and his way of life and thus move out of one group to enter the other fold. If it were possible to form a united community of the peoples of the world, it could only be founded on the principles of Islam. All other doctrines divide mankind. Islam welds peoples together into one united brotherhood.

The Sovereignty of God

Subsequent to the introduction of these reforms the society which emerges on the principles propounded by Islam is a society, the attitude, spirit and social structure of which undergoes a complete transformation. In this society, the basic principle on which the state is formed is that sovereignty lies with God, not with man. God is the Sovereign Ruler. He is the Law-giver. Man functions only as the vice-regent of God. To start with, the political system of Islam wipes out all those evils which arise in a system in which the laws are framed by men and man rules over man. The striking distinction in this kind of political system is that a spirit of piety and service to God pervades it.

The rulers and the ruled both understand that they are directly accountable to God Almighty who is Omnipresent, the Knower of the seen and the unseen. The citizen pays taxes as donations in the service of God; the tax-collectors consider it the wealth of God and themselves only as its trustees. From the ordinary policeman to the judge and governor, every state official performs his functions in the same state of mind in which he prays to God, for both are equally, acts of devotion to the Almighty and in both cases the same spirit of piety and dread of Divine authority is required.

The virtues looked for in the candidates whom the citizens elect from among themselves to act as the representatives of God on earth are fear of God, trustworthiness and integrity of character. In this process only those persons are elevated to positions of power and authority in society who surpass other citizens in moral excellence. Islam permeates society and culture with the same spirit of piety and purity of morals. The keynote of this civilisation is service to God rather than slavery to passions. Almighty God is the Arbitrator between man and man; relations among men are regulated by the law of God. Since the Law-Giver is free from all sensuality and self-interest and is All-Knowing and Wise, His Law necessarily averts every possibility for the rise of mischief or tyranny in this society for all times to come. The Divine Law, however, makes due allowance for every aspect of human nature and makes provisions for every human need.

Time does not allow me to present before you a complete picture of the structure of a society based on the principles of Islam. You can, however, form an idea of the kind of attitude, consequences and possibilities which emerge from the viewpoint regarding man and the universe presented by the Prophets of God. It is not a utopian state, the blueprint of which is drawn on paper only. The existence of a society and a state based on this viewpoint is a historical fact. No better citizens and no humanitarian state better than the one created by the Islamic concept of the universe have ever existed on the surface of the earth in the whole history of mankind.

If after this historically successful experiment an individual is not prepared to accept the validity of the Prophets' viewpoint about the nature of the universe and the position of man in the cosmos, there is no way that such an individual will ever be persuaded. God angels and the life of the Hereafter are not open to the direct view of any man. In the absence of direct observation, experience is the best guide in determining the validity and existence of any phenomenon. Take an example. A physician, on examination of his patient, is unable to determine the real defect in his internal system. In such a case, the physician administers various medicines and waits to see which medicine reaches the target in the hidden recesses of the human body and eliminates the defect. The fact that a certain medicine proved efficacious in curing a disease is proof positive that this particular medicine was the only suitable means for removing the defect in the system of the human body. Similarly, if the defects of human life cannot be removed by any other ideological system and can be set right only by the solution offered by the Prophets, it is a proof positive that the Prophets' viewpoint is the right answer to the problems now facing the human race.

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The Religion of Truth

The Religion of Truth[1]

[This lecture was delivered in Jamia Millia Islamia - Delhi on 12th March 1943.]

The Holy Qur'an in a high-tone claim invites towards its system of life, in its own words, as follows: "Undoubtedly the only (valid or acceptable) system of life for Allah is Islam." (Al-e-Imran: 19) This short sentence is the topic of my lecture as there is no room for elaboration; I will explain shortly, its meaning. That will explain the claim made by Qur'an. After that I will discuss whether this claim should be endorsed and accepted or not. At the end I will explain the implications of this claim if and when, it is accepted.

Generally, the simple meaning of this short sentence is taken to be that the religion that is deemed to be correct and acceptable before God is Islam only. The concept of Islam which is generally in the minds of the people is that this is a name of a religion born in the Arabian Peninsula some 1400 years ago and it was founded by Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I am using the phrase: "founded by" intentionally because not only non-Muslims but a large number of Muslims, including educated Muslims, call Muhammad (pbuh) as "the founder of Islam" and as such they write in their essays and articles. In other words, to them, Islam had been started by Muhammad (pbuh) and he is its founder. Therefore, when a non-Muslim, while reading, reaches this sentence he passes over it superficially presuming that as all religions claims that they are only true religion and all other

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[1] Translated by: Sayyid Hamed Abdur Rahman Alkaf, Prof. Arabic & Tafseer, Jamia Darul Huda, Hyderabad

religions are untrue and false, similarly Qur'an must also be claiming that it is the only true religion. When a Muslim passes over this sentence he never takes trouble to ponder over it because the religion which has been stated to be the true religion, he too believes that it is the only true religion. If at all there appears to be some sort of concern in his mind, it takes the direction of making comparison with other religions like Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions, to prove that Islam is the only true religion. As a matter of fact, this is a place in the Holy Qur'an where a serious student must think deeply- more deeply than it has been thought over so far.

First thing we have to do for understanding this claim of Qur'an is to determine the meaning of the word: "Ad-Deen" (the system of life) and "Al-Islam" (total and unconditional submission to the will and wish of Allah, the Almighty).

The meaning of Ad-Deen

The meaning of Ad-Deen in the Arabic language the word "Ad-Deen" carries a number of meanings. One of its meanings is supremacy and power (authority). Other meaning is obedience and slavery, third meaning is reward and compensation, its fourth meaning is the way and road. This word here has been used in its fourth sense & meaning. Ad-Deen means: system of life or mode of thought and action which are obeyed and followed.

However, it must be borne in mind that the Qur'an has used Ad-Deen and not Deen only. By that the difference in meaning occurs when one says: this is the way instead of saying: this is a way. The Qur'an does not claim that Islam is a way of life but it claims that Islam is the only true and right way of life or mode of thought and action. In addition to that it must also be kept in mind that the Qur'an does not use this word in a limited meaning but it uses in its widest and most comprehensive meaning. By way of life it never means that it is for a particular aspect or sphere of life but it is the way of the 'Whole Life'. It is not a way of life of one and single

individual only but as a whole it is the way of life of the whole of society. It is not the way of life of a particular country or a particular time and age but a way of life for all times and ages of all: both in their individual or collective life. Hence, the meaning of the Quran's claim is not that the rituals or rites of worship and beliefs in the super-natural world and his life after death and the collection of these beliefs is a true and correct "religion" and which is called Islam. Neither its meaning is that religious thoughts and behaviours of human individuals (as is defined in the meaning of this word when it is used in today's western terminology) represent the true interpretation of Islam nor it means that it is good and suitable for the people of Arabia or for the people of such and such century or for the benefit of the people of a particular period or stage of the history, for example, for the people and age of pre-Industrial Revolution. In very clear terms and language the Qur'an claims that Islam is the only true, correct and right system of life for the whole humanity for every period and time and for each and every age and stage with Allah on the surface of the earth - Islam only and nothing else other than Islam and its system of life.

I was surprised to learn that, in Europe & Asia an interpretation of Qur'an has been published in which the meaning of Deen has been confined and limited to the individual relationship between Allah and His creature called man and that it — the Deen — has nothing to do with the politics or civil affairs. If this interpretation has been drawn from the Qur'an itself, it will be very interesting to know and learn. But in the light of the study of the Holy Qur'an undertaken by me for 18 years I can claim without the slightest fear of refutation and dispute; notwithstanding the desires and inclinations of all new interpreters of the Qur'an, that it has never used the word Ad-Deen in any limited meaning, but it always used it to mean that it is good, suitable and beneficial to the people of all ages and times in every walk and sphere of their lives as a complete and comprehensive system of thought and action.

The meaning of Al-Islam

Now take the meaning of "Islam", in the Arabic language it means to surrender, to give up, to bow down, and to accept obedience. However, the Qur'an does not state Islam but Al-Islam which is a special term. In its special terminology, it means to bow down before Allah, to accept His obedience and surrender one's own independence and to surrender oneself to Him. In this sense, the meaning of surrendering & submission never means surrendering before the Law of Nature. As attempted by some people to mean it. Nor it means that a person imagines or draws from his observation and experience, a will, a wish or a like or a dislike of Allah or obeys that imaginary wish or will as conceived by some people mistakenly. Contrary to that it means to accept and follow the guidance and mode of thought and action sent down by Allah through His prophets or messengers and to leave aside his own independence in thought and action. In other words, to leave off all his own detracted thoughts and actions freely and follow Allah's guidance. The Qur'an expresses all this — with its entire negative and positive aspects — in a single word "Al-Islam". As a matter of fact it is not a new religion which had been founded some fourteen hundred years ago in Arabia by Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It is from the very first man on the earth when Allah told him that it is the only true, correct and right code of his behaviour. Since then, from time to time, in various parts of the world Allah's prophets and messengers have been sent to guide men to the right system of life. Their call and message invariably was towards Al-Islam only and towards which, finally, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had called the people of the world at large. It is in this context, the followers of Moses (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after adding and mixing many elements developed a system named Judaism. Likewise Christians too made a system called Christianity. Following the same path the followers of the prophets and messengers in India, Iran and China and other countries developed mixed systems by different names.

However, the call, message and system towards which Moses and Christ (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them) and other known and unknown prophets and messengers (peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them) called and invited was pure Islam and nothing else.

What is the claim of Qur'an?

After this explanation, the claim of Qur'an becomes clear and evident before us. That claim is like this: "For mankind the only right, true and correct way is surrendering one's self before Him and to follow that path as shown by the prophets of Allah." This is the Qur'an claim. Now we have to investigate whether this claim is worth accepting? We shall consider the arguments presented by the Qur'an in support of its claim but first of all, why not we ourselves search and enquire whether we have any other option open before us besides accepting it?

Necessity for a system of life:

It is apparent that man needs a way of life for himself, which he has to opt and choose. Here you have to remember that man is not a river whose direction of flow is determined by ups and downs of the earth which it flows through. Man is not a tree whose system (of growth and death) is determined by the laws of nature. Moreover, man is not an animal whose movements and actions are controlled by his instincts. Man, though he is governed by the laws of nature in a large part of his life; there are still many aspects of his life in which he does not find demarcated way to walk over it like the animals which are guided by their instincts. Contrary to that he has to choose his own way based on his own choice. He needs a way of thinking by which he would resolve his own and universe's questions and problems which are displayed by nature before his thinking mind: but the nature does not provide him any solutions to him in a clear and understandable language. Moreover, he needs a road to knowledge. With which He is expected to organize that information which is provided to his

mind by his senses; but nature delivers to him after organizing them. He requires methods to satisfy his many natural and personal needs which are demanded by nature and which never shows him civilized ways to satisfy them. He must have a way to handle his family matters, matrimonial issues, to manage his economic affairs, to administer his country's affairs, to co-ordinate his country's foreign relations and to overcome many other problems in several aspects of his collective life, to move on that way and path not as individual only, but as a group, as a nation and as a kind to realize those objectives which are naturally desired and wanted but they have not been clearly stated to him by nature nor does it have a specified way and method to achieve them.

Division of life:

These different aspects of life, [Man has to choose inevitably one of the] which are themselves not totally independent and disconnected with each other and which offer an opportunity for man to opt one out of them and go into various directions where travelling needs, requirements and provisions are different and the techniques to walk over them differ from each other and prerequisites of walking on them are quite unknown to each other. He finds targets of their travelling missions too strange to one another. If man uses his intellect in a rational manner and attempts to understand in a fact-finding way, his attempt will be sufficient to satisfy him that human life as a whole is one indivisible unit and that all parts in it are joined with each other and all aspects are strongly co-related. These relations and connections are unbreakable. Each of them influences others and in turn is also influenced by them. In fact, one blood circulates in the whole body. One spirit sweeps throughout the body. All collaborate to form one entity named the human body and life. Hence man needs not many purposes and aims of life but only one purpose and one objective under which small and large purposes and aims can survive and exist at their respective places harmoniously. All of them will strive together to realize that

one purpose and goal. He requires only one way and not many ways on which he can drive his whole life towards his life-goal, with all its aspects, in complete harmony. He does not need a political system, and a separate economic order, yet another financial framework and a new and separate system for art, culture, education, morals, law, religion and society. What he needs requires and demands, is one complete and comprehensive system in which all above mentioned systems are harmoniously fitted, each of them functioning in harmony with other without collisions or conflicts. This is because all of them possess same nature and temperaments in principles and actions and by following it as an individual, group of individuals and humanity as a whole, is it possible to reach highest attainable goal in this world. There was a dark and un-Islamic period in the human life and history when division of the life into totally separate and independent departments and compartments used to be considered possible. If today some people still talk about departmentalization and compartmentalization of life and its division in small parts, they are either living in an ancient era and, therefore, deserve our kindness and mercy or else being unjust by nature, they know the truth very well, but purposely they talk about divisibility of life into small pieces only because they are in need of satisfying those who differ with the basic principles of their system of life that they will be safe and happy in those sectors which are very dear to them while those sectors are intellectually impossible and naturally unimaginable. I presume that those who talk like that themselves clearly know that it is just and simply not possible & feasible. Every dominant and prevailing system of life according to its own mood and temperament injects its spirit into the body-politic of that system. It is just like a salt mine which turns everything inside it into salt.

The geographical and racial division of life:

As it is unreasonable to divide human life in departments and compartments, it is even more unreasonable to divide it

into geographical circles and racial boundaries. Undoubtedly, men live in different parts of the earth which have been divided into rivers, mountains, forests and oceans or artificial borders. Furthermore, without any doubt there are many human races and nations among them due to historical, psychological and other factors, which and during the progress of humanity have taken different shapes and kinds. However, taking them as a basis for his argument, if a person claims that for each race, nation and geographical entity, there must be a different 'Deen' for each of them, then his claim and statement will be an absurd thing. Just because his limited vision entangled in the outer superficial variety and differences, fails to see the essence of human unity among diversity. If, as a matter of fact, these differences were so important so as to warrant a separate Deen for each of them then I will say that please make a note of all the differences possible, which could be noticed between nations and ethnicities. Then have an in-depth look over the differences which exist between a man and woman, between two human beings and between two children of one mother. I hope that it would not be an exaggeration in the light of scientific analysis that these differences are deeper and more serious than the former. Why then, you don't feel that every individual's life must be separate and independent. However, when you confined an element of lasting unity —eternal or unifying factor— among the multiplicity of individuals, gender-based and family-based entities on whose basis theories of race, nations and countries can be built and on the basis of that concept it is believed and considered right to suggest for a large country or a nation. As long as that possibility is thought to be practical, then what prevents you from finding a great and basic common fact from among the multiplicity of a nation, a race and a country, and that a humanitarian concept should be developed and on that ground it should be taken as a Deen for all human beings? Isn't a fact that all men and women despite the geographical, racial and national differences, they are all subject to same natural laws, by following which they are living on the face of the earth. All of them are governed in their

body by the system of the same principles, on which man was created. All those characteristics are one and the same which distinguish mankind from other creatures and entities and make them a separate kind and species. All demands of nature are common among them. Those have been bestowed by the nature. All those powers are similar which we call them human-self. Basically all natural, psychological, historical, social and economic factors are the same which are active in the human life. If these are not facts, who can dare deny these facts. Then those principles are good for the well-being of men, as they are universal principles. There is no reason why these principles should only be national and racial. Nations and races can manifest them in their characteristics totally or partially under the shadow of their principles and can manage their affairs of life in different ways. They should behave like that, under all circumstances that correct or true system of life or Deen which man needs, must be one only. Human mind rejects the idea that one thing good for a nation shall not be good for another nation and what is right for one nation should not be right for the other. What is wrong and damaging for one nation should not be wrong and damaging for other nations.

Division of the human life on the basis of time:

One of the scientific absurdities of the modern age and which has gained acceptability as a factual point of view and is presented with full confidence and apparently unshakable belief, is the evolution of the human way of life with time. It is said that a certain way of life which was true, correct and right in a particular age is untrue, incorrect and wrong in another age because problems and dealings of life change in each and every age and those problems of life and dealings can be true or untrue and right or wrong depending upon their nature. Side by side with this claim, the door for discussion about evolution is also opened. Factors active in history are searched and researched. Conclusions are drawn in the sphere of its past. Lessons are presented because results are evolved around it. For all that, something named "human nature" is proved too. I

would like to ask you: do you possess a measuring instrument with the help of which you can demonstrate periods, times, and stages in the continuous historical movement of humanity? Is it possible for you by putting a finger on a line to claim that actions have totally and wholly changed and the conditions which were prevailing on that point of time do not exist anymore? If human history is divided into separate parts, then we will have to suppose that a certain piece of the human history is needless and irrelevant to another portion that came after it. It means that everything done and achieved by the human race in that past portion was futile. It also means that the experiences gained by mankind in that particular portion of time in those circumstances in which man tried to test some methods and reached some principles and values has now vanished altogether. After that, why are you then lecturing about evolution? Why are you searching about laws of life? Why are these historical conclusions so important to you? When you speak about evolution, then it eventually carries in its fold the premise that there is something that causes all changes to happen and occur and keeps itself safe and alive during those changes and continues to move along with them. When you talk and discuss about the laws of nature, it entails that earn in those unstable conditions and in those constantly moving phenomenon and in the building up of destructing facets and periods, there is something stable and alive at all times which has its own particulars and independent characteristics. When you draw historical conclusions— you imply that the traveller who had trodden on this timeless road, stage by stage, possesses his own personality and enjoys his own mood and temperament and under given circumstances could be used to work and behave in a particular manner. At certain times we used to accept certain things and at other times we used to reject them and demand some other things. This undeniable fact, which encountered so many changes, is the non-stop traveller of the road of history whom you perhaps refer to as "Humanity" But then when you discuss the various stages and periods of the road and talk about the conditions and

the problems created by them, you become so obsessed with them that by the changing of periods and stages and the changing of their circumstances, you conclude that the traveller himself and his nature underwent a change as well? It is observed by us from the very beginning till date that his body and structure has not undergone through any change. His components are same as they have been for thousands of years. His characteristics and features have remained unchanged. His inclinations and preferences have never seen any change. All his powers and capacities are the same and unchanged as well as all his short-comings and capabilities. His ways of action and reaction and ability to influence and to be influenced have remained same. All powers governing him and all universal environments have never undergone any changes. Nothing among them from his first day on this planet, to this day has changed even slightly. No one can dare to say that during the very long history of mankind, the changes in the conditions and problems created under the pressure of change, have transformed mankind itself and even the basic things which are appended to humanity have been impacted by that change. Then on what basis this claim is made that what was an antidote yesterday has become a deadly poison today. And what was true yesterday is untrue today and what was valuable for man yesterday carries no value today.

Which type of system of life does man need?

To be true, it is a fact that during the history human individuals and groups by committing mistake in understanding basic requirements of human self and by exaggerating in acknowledgement of some facts while failing to comprehend others and as a result chose various wrong systems of life, from time to time and here and there and which were wrong for the humanity at large after experimenting them and forced them to vacate their positions in favour of similar wrong systems of life. After studying their past history and making certain observations, it has been concluded that mankind, of necessity, in every stage and period (of history), is

in need of a system of life which should crop up by the force of the problems created by it and whose resolution it should be credited by it and whose resolution it should aim at.

Contrary to this if, in a better manner, we could get a conclusion from this past history, it is that in experimenting these time and period-based systems of life in other words "seasonal insects and pests" again and again and after the failure of one, mankind at large wasted it precious time, energy and wealth in embarking upon testing another and lost its track. By that grave difficulties and hurdles arose on its road to evolution and progress and reaching to the zenith of perfection. It, as a matter of fact, is in a dire need of a system of life which takes into account every fact about it together with all other facts which are related to it and incorporate them within its folds universal, lasting and perpetual principles and makes them its foundation so that it becomes able to pass through always changing conditions and circumstances safely and could be able to solve all problems which are created by them. With the help of that system of life he could travel on the road of life towards his destination smoothly and not topsy-turvy.

Can man frame by himself such a system of life?

This is the DEEN which is needed by man or this is the nature of that system of life. Now we will have to see whether man himself can frame such a system being indifferent to help from his Creator, Allah the Almighty and be successful in his attempt? I am not going to ask you the question: whether man has been able so far to frame or develop such a system of life because the answer to it is flatly negative. All those people who make high claims today while presenting their systems of life and are fighting with each other doggedly, cannot claim that any of the systems of life presented by them can meet all that required and demanded by man for which, man as a man, needs Ad-Deen, a flawless system of life. One of them preaches a racial and national system of life while other speaks about a geographical or class-based system of life. Yet another is there whose system of life is born to satisfy the demands of

that period which has past just yesterday. As far as tomorrow is concerned, it cannot be said it will meet its demands because no audit had been undertaken about its positive and negative aspects and no evaluation has been made regarding its historical value in terms of its meeting the challenges posed by my question whether man had succeeded in framing and chalking out such a system of life or not. But my question is whether man can be successful in his attempt for himself and by himself? This is a very decisive question which cannot be discussed superficially. It is one of the decisive questions of the human life. Hence it is vitally important for you to fully grasp what is going to be framed and chalked out? What are the qualifications and specifications of that person who is going to be asked and whether he could accept that task or not.

The nature of Ad-Deen- an ideal system of life:

The ideal system of life required by the man whose necessity for man, which I have just elaborated and proved fully and in detail, is not a very detailed code of life which comprises of tiniest matters of life in all ages and places including all circumstances which could occur and happen and whose very existence induces men to apply it and practice it. By that system it, in fact means there should be such eternal and universal principles which could guide human beings under all circumstances and which could determine a right direction to his thought, action, efforts and advancement and to save him from wasting his time and energy in experimenting ideas which are destined to fail. For this purpose it is necessary for man to know —not just guess and suppose— what is his nature and nature of the universe and what is his own position in this seemingly unlimited span? Moreover he is in need of knowing —not supposedly understanding— whether his life ends in this world only or it is just initial part of a whole life, whether his journey begins with his birth and ends by his death. In addition to that he will have an aim of his life which by its very nature —not under the pressure of his desire— should be the aim and objective of humanity and for which

man has been created and with each individual, each group and as a whole all human beings, in all periods of time and places, without any resistance and conflict, be in complete harmony with it. Furthermore, he requires such comprehensive and powerful ethical principles which are in harmony with his nature and natural characteristics and which may be applicable on all possible theoretical and practical conditions of life so that they could build up their morals on its basis and solve all problems faced by them at each stage of life in that light so that they do not expose themselves to the dangers of changing principles of conduct and behaviour in accordance with the changing circumstances and problems lest they become mere characterless and opportunists. Side by side, they need comprehensive and adaptable principles of social life which have been developed and framed keeping in mind their nature's demands and which are free from going to extremes and imbalance and in which the common interests of all human beings are taken care of by adopting them; It should be possible to construct and promote all aspects of the human life and push it on the road to progress. Along that, it requires to be kept towards right direction in his personal behaviour, social trends and in individual and social struggle and efforts. He needs protection from side-tracking by clear limits and boundaries which should serve the task of landmarks and milestones which could warn him at every nook and corner and turning point and crossroad and at dangerous stage that this is his right way and that is a dangerous road. In addition to that he requires few practical regulations which are eternal and universal by their very nature and are practicable and could keep human life attached with the fact of life, destiny of life, aim of life and ethical and social limits which have been determined and pre-pointed by Ad-Deen-the ideal system of life. This is what we are required to frame and build. At this juncture, we will have to consider seriously whether man possesses those ways and means which enable him to formulate for himself such Ad-Deen-an ideal system of life-as outlined above.

A look at ways and means at the disposal of man:

Man has, at his disposal, for developing his own DEEN, system of life, not more than four sources and means: first source is his desire(s), second source is his mind and intellect, third source is observation and experiments and the fourth and last source is the historical record of his past experiments. Most probably nobody can point out a fifth source available for man. You must take stock of all these four sources/means in as complete a way as possible to see that they could be used in the invention and formulation of Ad-Deen, an ideal system of life. I have spent a considerable part of my life in searching this fact. After that effort I arrived at the conclusion that these ways and means at the disposal of man cannot be helpful in the invention and formulation of Ad-Deen. These ways and means can assist man in understanding, testing and knowing and in formulating and framing, from time to time, details of life in accordance with that Ad-Deen.

Desire

First of all, take the "desire" to see whether it could lead human life? Although it is an original power within the human self which pushes him to work and to be active; but due to its own defects and shortcomings it can never become capable of leading human life. Not only it cannot all alone lead the life of man but it, in most of the cases, has misled the mind and the knowledge of man. If through training it is made most civilized and enlightened, but whenever a final decision is left to it, it can be stated, without the fear of exaggeration, that in 99% cases it will make wrong and misleading decisions. This is because its internal impulses force it to make in correct decision and never allow it to make right decisions. The real objective behind this is always to realize its aim, by any way and means, immediately and easily. It is the natural shortcoming of the very nature of "human desire". Therefore, whether it is an individual wish, as pointed out by (the famous French philosopher) Jean-Jacques Rousseau, under all circumstances any kind and type of human desire/General will

is incapable of and by its very nature does not possess the qualification to formulate and frame the Ad-Deen; but as far as the ultimate problems like nature and substance of the human life, are concerned their destiny and aim, it can be able to assist him.

Mind/intellect

Next comes the "mind/ intellect". There is no lack of acknowledgement of its superb capabilities, its paramount importance in human life is undeniable and it is also recognized it is a great leading power within the human entity and despite the question whose mind/intellect will work out Ad-Deen? Zaid's or Bakr's mind? All human minds? The minds of past or the future? The only question is that after surveying the limits of the "human mind" itself, can you say whether you can depend upon it in developing, framing and formulating "Ad-Deen"? All its decisions depend upon the information and material provided to his senses: if wrong and inaccurate or mistaken information and material is supplied to his senses, it will make a wrong decision. If they provided defective information to him, his mind will make defective decision. In some matters if they don't provide his senses any information, in such cases it, by its very nature, a wrong-doer, will jump in the dark recklessly. Then with its limitations and constraints how do you think that it qualified to draw a complete code of life---Ad-Deen? How can you entrust it with that difficult and hazardous task? This is due to the fact that the answers required to the ultimate questions on which the formation of a system of life is totally dependent, the sense cannot find any information at all. In this event, is it possible to establish that Ad-Deen on imaginary and faulty ideas and superstitions and suppositions and assumptions? The eternal moral values determination is simply unavoidable. In this respect, senses provide a very defective material.

Then, how can you expect from the mind and intellect that it will, in the light of defective material, determine correct and true moral values. Likewise, as I have already mentioned about

the other components of Ad-Deen, the senses cannot be helpful in providing correct and complete material; also the mind/intellect cannot build on its basis a comprehensive and complete way of life. Moreover, the mind and intellect is always accompanied by wish and desire which prevent mind from taking purely reasonable decisions and mould its straight forwardness on the wrong side in one way or another. Therefore if it is somehow assumed that the human mind, in the light of the material supplied by the senses, will not commit any mistake, then it is not possible that in the view of its deficiencies it will attain that level which involves it to bear such a heavy burden. If that heavy burden is mounted upon it, that will be an injustice not only against mind and intellect but also against us.

Science:

Let us now take that knowledge which is obtained by observation and experiment. I do not lag behind any student in acknowledging the value of science and scientific knowledge and detest that it should be insulted in any way and manner. However, to overlook its limitations and the constraints inherent in it and to expand its horizon which it actually cannot encompass is a non-academic and unscientific act. Whoever knows the nature of the "human knowledge" will not dispute and challenge my statement. As far as the ultimate issues and problems are concerned, humans cannot grasp their secret because man has not, at his command, the resources which enable him to grasp it. He cannot observe them directly nor can he express his opinion about them by the assistance of those things which fall under the category of observation and experiment and which is called knowledge. Hence, to develop and formulate Ad-Deen, it is a prerequisite to know the solution of those problems which fall beyond the control and domain of the human knowledge regarding the question of ethical values, principles of social life and the demarcation of the boundaries which serve as a shield against detraction and whether science/knowledge can be entrusted with the task of

their accomplishment or not. After ignoring the fact which individual or group of people and science/knowledge of which age and period, we will have to see that to discharge this task, in a scientific manner, what those laws of nature are which govern human life in this world. The second condition in this respect is that all those sciences and knowledge which are related to human life must be perfect. The third condition is that all information derived from these sciences and knowledge— should be collected together and a perfect mind should arrange them correctly and draw from that correct ethical value for men and correct principles of civilization and culture and demarcate the boundaries which prevent detraction (from the right path). These terms and conditions have not been fulfilled to date and are not expected to be fulfilled within 5000 years from today. It is just possible that they could become a truth and a fact just one day before the death of humanity. But at that late hour what will be its use and benefit?

History:

Lastly, please take that source of knowledge and information which we call it as the record of the human experiments and experiences or it is called the record of the human activities. I don't deny its importance nor its benefits and advantages. I tell you and if you think over you will agree with me that for the formulation of the great task of a system of life for mankind Ad-Deen, it is also insufficient in this connection. I am not raising the question whether this record from the past to present has been delivered to the people with complete accuracy and cover all events and accidents or not? I also do not throw the question about the representative mind of the man who will embark upon this unique venture of drafting of Ad-Deen? By Hegel's mind or by Marx's mind or anybody else's mind? I want to ask simply: which is that history whose record of past, present and future is sufficient to frame Ad-Deen? Those who were born after that date are very fortunate people but what about the fate of the people who were born before that date?

Hopeless result:

These are very short points which I have raised. I hope that I have not committed a mistake in my argument. If we take stock of the human resources as I have done, then nothing prevents us from arriving at the conclusion that man can formulate for himself a half-baked, half-right half –wrong and a local Deen and if he wishes to frame Ad-Deen it is just impossible. It is impossible today and there is no hope that in future this possibility will be existent. If there is no Allah (God) as proclaimed by atheists, it is suitable for man to commit suicide, if a traveller does not know his destination and has no one to guide and has no ways and means to find his destination, then he possesses one thing only: total and complete disappointment. Anyone who bears sympathy in his heart for him will advise him to break his head with stone found on the side of the road. If there is a God but he does not guide (people to the right path) as believed by those who claim to be thinking on philosophical and scientific lines, then the situation is more than sorrowful. Just think about a God who has created for the nourishment and sustenance of all creatures imaginable and anything existing on the earth and in the heavens; but has not provided him with the thing he needs most and without which man passes a totally wrong life, then it will be unbearably miserable to live in His world and on His earth. Why are you weeping for the poor, paupers, sick, wounded and victims of injustice while the poor and whole humanity has been left in a situation in which it tries and fails again and again? It walks one step forward but two steps backward. It walks few steps and goes off the track or falls in the pits on the road. On each stumbling country after country, and nation after nation are destroyed. This poor humanity doesn't know its aim and purpose of life and does not know for what purpose it must strive and struggle and in what way and manner. All this is seen and observed by a God who has created him on the earth but never cares to guide him!!!

The only ray of hope

In contrast to this picture Quran presents before us quite a different picture. It says that the God - Allah the Almighty--- is not only the Creator but also the Guide. He has deposited into every creature its guidance which will be compatible with its nature and recited by it:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِيٓ أَعۡطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيۡءٍ خَلۡقَهُۥ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾

One who gave everything its shape and then guided it. (Taha: 50)

If you want a proof of that claim, then get hold of any ant, any fly and any spider and study it. The God —Allah, the Almighty— who has guided them, has guided man too. It is, therefore, a right way for the man to get rid of his egoism and bow down before Him and follow that Ad-Deen, and the ideal system of life — which He has sent down to the human beings through His messengers (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them). Please look on the one hand the result we have arrived at after we reviewed man's powers and ways and means at his disposal, and on the other hand there is the claim made by the Quran. No, there is no way left for us except to accept this claim or else surrender ourselves to disappointment and hopelessness. A disappointment whose darkness does not contain a ray of hope in its folds; the situation is that there are two more ways to obtain Ad-Deen and we have options to choose one source from which we can get Ad-Deen. The only option before us whether we seek assistance from this source and instead of utilizing it is that prefer to wander about in total darkness.

Arguments presented by the Quran:

The arguments I have presented so far take us to the fact that for our own welfare it is but unavoidable to accept the Quranic claim. In other words it means that if you cannot become an unbeliever then become Muslim, not because you are contented that Islam is the correct way of life but because you have had no other option to opt. On the other hand the

arguments presented by the Qur'an in favour of its claim are far superior and more weighty and dignified because it wants us not to accept Islam under no-choice, option less situation but on the basis of complete satisfaction and with our free will and choice. Its four arguments which we have presented repeatedly and again and again are:

1. Islam is the only true, correct and right system of life because it is compatible with the real facts of life and every other system of life is incompatible with facts of life.

أَفَغَيْرَ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ يَبْغُوْنَ وَلَهٗٓ اَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَّكَرْهًا وَّاِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾ (آل عمران)

Do they want a system of life other than Allah's system of life while everything on the earth and in heavens has submitted to his will with its choice or under compulsion? And to Him (all things) shall return. *(Ale-Imran: 83)*

2. This is the only correct and right system of life and in terms of justice and there cannot be another true and right system of life.

اِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ فِيْ سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي الَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهٗ حَثِيْثًا ۙ وَّالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُوْمَ مُسَخَّرٰتٍۭ بِاَمْرِهٖ ۭ اَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْاَمْرُ ۭ تَبٰرَكَ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾ (الاعراف)

Undoubtedly your Sustainer is Allah who had created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then He ascended the throne. (He) covers the (bright) day with (the dark) night and then He let the day chase in hurry the night. The Sun, the moon and the stars are obedient of His order. Beware! His is the creation and His is the order/authority. Blessed is Allah, Nourisher of the creatures. *(Al-A'raf: 54)*

3. This is the only right policy for man because Allah, the Almighty, has the complete knowledge of all facts and He can bestow upon human being a faultless guidance:

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَخْفٰى عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَآءِ ۝٥ (آل عمران)

Nothing is hidden from Allah neither in the earth nor in the heavens. *(Ale-Imran: 5)*

اَللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ اَلْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۚ لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ سِنَةٌ وَّلَا نَوْمٌ ۭ لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِيْ يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهٗٓ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ ۭ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُحِيْطُوْنَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهٖٓ اِلَّا بِمَا شَاۗءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ ۚ وَلَا يَـــُٔـوْدُهٗ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيْمُ ۝٢٥٥ (البقرة)

Knows whatever is before the people and whatever behind them. People cannot know anything from His knowledge except those which He Himself let them knows. *(Al-Baqra: 255)*

قُلْ اِنَّ هُدَى اللّٰهِ هُوَ الْهُدٰى ۭ (الانعام: ۷۱)

Say: "Surely Allah's guidance is th only true guidance."

(Al-Anaam: 71)

4. This is the only just road for the humanity because without treading that no justice could be established. Otherwise, whichever way man opts, it leads to injustice:

وَمَنْ يَّتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهٗ ۭ (الطلاق)

And he who transgresses the bounds set by Allah commits a wrong against himself. *(Al-Tallak: 1)*

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ فَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ۝٤٥ (المائدة)

Those who do not pass their judgments according to what has been revealed by Allah, they are unjust. *(Al-Maida: 45)*

These are the arguments which compel a rational person to bow his head before Allah and to go back to Him for receiving guidance.

Parameters for testing Allah's guidance:

Before moving forward I would like to answer a question which should have cropped up in the many minds as we reach

this stage. I faced this question when I was going through the period of academic preparation. That question is like this: is it binding upon us to accept the claim of a person who stands before and claims that what he is neglecting, what are those standards and parameters which could help us in differentiating between a man-made way of life and an Allah sent guidance? The answer to this question requires a detailed scientific investigation. I will, in short four points, explain those standards and parameters which help us in distinguishing between man's ideas and God's ideas, The first characteristic of the human Idea and thought is that it suffers from the shortage and limitation of knowledge and it is always with it. As against Godly idea and thought it is distinguished by unlimited and accurate knowledge. They are clearly reflected in them. Anything which is from Allah, you cannot find in it which is scientifically against any discovery made in any age or no one can say that its author missed this or that aspect. Here please don't forget the big difference between knowledge and scientific forecast and scientific theory. At a certain time when some scientific forecast and scientific theories are dominant on the minds of the people, most take them as 'knowledge' although the possibility of their being wrong is as much as the possibility of being right. In the history of knowledge there are few things which have been proved to be the knowledge.

The second great defect of the human thought is that very short-signed. Contrary to that you will it is in Godly thought there is the widest point of view of anything and about anything adopted. When you study anything flowing or branching from the Godly thought you will feel that the author of this thought holds point of view which covers the time from its beginning to its end - i.e. covers past, present and future. He looks at all facts from one (space and time) point of view in comparison to that we will feel that, the thoughts of the greatest philosopher and thinker is just like childish thought.

The third feature of human thought compromises is that somewhere and somehow we will see that it comprises with

wisdom, knowledge feelings and desires. Opposite to that is the Godly thought in which there is pure and uncompromising wisdom and knowledge so much so that you will never find in it emotional inclinations. Another shortcoming of the human thought is that whatever system of life it will formulate, it will incline towards someone. It will differentiate between man and man on totally irrational logic. You will detect this in all his attempts and efforts. This is because every human has his own interests which are linked and associated with some people. He has no interests with others at all. Against the system of life which springs from the Godly thought that it will be free from all such elements. You can put that system of life which claims its origin from Allah, the Almighty and hence defines itself as Ad-Deen, to test on these parameters; you will surely find it free from all those human defects and shortcomings. It will also contain in its folds the lofty and outstanding features of comprehensiveness and all-embracing features and characteristics which I have stated previously when I was speaking about the necessity of human beings for having Ad-Deen. After that there is no reason for you for not believing in it.

Demands of the belief

At this point I will discuss the last question of my lecture and that is: if a person accepts the claim put forward by the Holy Qur'an and declares his belief in that Ad-Deen about whom he is contented and satisfied from the core of his heart, then what are the consequences and outcomes of his recognition and acknowledgment? In the beginning of my lecture I have stated that Islam means submission, bowing down your head, body and soul and surrendering of your will and wish. With that submission and surrendering, there could be no co-existence of self-opinion, independence and freedom in thought and action. Whatever may be the system of life, you cannot exempt anything belonging to you from that system. It is the belief that must be system of your heart and mind, your eyes and ears, your stomach and body, your pen and tongue,

your time and efforts, your action and struggle, your love and hatred. In nutshell, there must not be any part or any aspect of your life out of the boundaries of this system of life. Whatever part of your life and in whichever position you try to keep out of the bounds of this system of life and exempt it from its domain, you will be that much liar in your claim while it is the duty of right liking person to keep his life, as far as it is possible, clean from lies. Moreover, I have pointed out in the very beginning of my lecture that human life is an indivisible unit which cannot be divided in departments and compartments. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be only one Deen. Following of two or more than two Deen only indicate that the belief is not firm and it's shaky and that there is no stability in the decision-making process. Whenever you are completely satisfied from the bottom of your heart that a particular Deen is Ad-Deen, it should be Deen of all aspects or sections of your life. If it is your Deen in your personal life, there is no reason why it should not be the Deen of your household and the Deen of - upbringing of your children, your education, your school, your business, your nation, your civilization, politics, your literature and your arts? As it is impossible that each of a string of beads before becoming a beautiful part of string of beads was having its own identity, it is no longer a bead by itself and something other than a bead in a string of beads!!! Likewise it does not appeal me that a particular part should be good for your individual and personal life but when it comes to organizing your life; you should keep a part/aspect of your life beyond the reach of your Deen. The greatest demand of your belief is that the DEEN you have accepted as being Ad-Deen, other human beings should be invited by you to enjoy the blessings of this Ad-Deen. All your struggle and efforts must be directed to making this Ad-Deen as the only Deen of all human beings. As it is the nature of the truth to become dominant, in the same way it is the truth— it never take rest until and unless it makes the truth dominant over falsehood. When a man sees that falsehood has become-dominant all over the world and over all inhabitants of the

Ethical Viewpoint of Islam

Ethical Viewpoint of Islam[1]

[This speech was given on 26 February 1944 at Islamia College, Peshawar]

Under normal circumstances when the stream of life runs calm and undisturbed, every individual enjoys a sense of mental peace and satisfaction; but the clear and shining surface of the stream fails to reveal the impurities which have settled at the bottom. They remain hidden and concealed. Deceived by the superficial calmness of the surface, people seldom feel the need to probe under the surface and get a feel of the currents and crosscurrents existing inside. But when the stream goes in spate, the impurities hidden at the bottom rise to the surface and become the gazing-stock. It is then that everyone who has eyes under his brows can see very clearly that the life-stream has been carrying within its fold such a bewildering stock of filth and impurities. This precisely is the moment when people are likely to become conscious of the necessity of probing deeper into the realities of life, of finding out the causes of the rot that was otherwise, hidden from the public view, and of devising ways and means to keep the stream of life pure and clean. If, however, the people do not wake up to this need even at such critical moments, this would betray a degree of moral insensibility which makes human beings totally indifferent to the very idea of social and moral well-being. Thank God, man has not stooped to that extent, and herein lies the real hope of the future.

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE MODERN WORLD

The times through which we are passing are disturbed and distressing. They present an abnormal spectacle. The life-

[1]Translated and Edited by: Khurshid Ahmad, M.A., LLB

stream is in convulsion. Nations of the world are in conflict with each other and everyone is anxious to strike at the other only to serve his national interests. The tension has grown to such dimensions that it is no longer confined to governments and national leaderships only but has strained relations even on the personal level. Nations are arrayed against nations. Communal groups are at daggers drawn' with each other. Individuals are behaving like sworn enemies of other individuals. Personal and social rivalries are rampant. Life is in a tumult. The result is that the moral vices, which people were nurturing within their bosoms now stand fully exposed. We are able to see in plain colours the moral degredations which had hitherto escaped the observation of the ordinary men and women. Only the unthinking can now harbour the delusion that nothing is wrong with the diseased humanity, that all is well in the state of Denmark. Only those individuals whose moral sense is perhaps altogether dead can remain unmindful towards the diagnosis and the treatment of the crisis that is threatening our existence. The contemporary situation is alarming and the danger is too pressing to be ignored.

The world has progressed in certain important directions. Nevertheless we are, today, witnessing the sorry spectacle of great nations indulging, on a large scale, in the moral vices which the conscience of humanity has always condemned with one voice. Injustice and ruthlessness, cruelty and brutality, falsehood and fraud, treachery and hypocrisy, breach of trust, self-aggrandizement, exploitation and other crimes are no longer confined to individuals. They have become an integral part of the national policies of certain countries. The great nations of the world are committing in relation to their rival nations and groups acts which, if committed even by their own subjects, would evoke for them the severest punishments. Instances are not lacking where, in the name of "diplomacy" and "strategy", nations have chosen to select condemned criminals and placed them at the helm of their affairs. There is no form of villainy, however heinous, which under the direction of such leaders, these nations have not committed

during the Second World War. Lies were fabricated and broadcast on a wide scale. The very air which we breathe has been poisoned by radios spinning waves of falsehood. Even today double-talk and double-act are the order of the day. Many a nation has taken upon itself the role of virtual robbers and bandits - what else is imperialism or colonialism, red or white or yellow!

What is more gruesome is the triumph of hypocrisy. Even in the face of naked aggrandizement, powerful nations have been trying to pose as angels and debunking their rivals while the fact is that the pot and the kettle are both equally black. Justice means justice only for their own people; rights, whatever they are, for them alone. Their ethical code not only legalizes that other peoples can be deprived of their just rights, but on occasions even approves of such acts as highly meritorious. The nations of the world have one standard for taking things in and another for giving them out. The criterion which a nation lays down for itself vanishes into thin air as soon as the question of other people's benefit comes in. Every nation infringes those very rules of morality which it insists upon others to observe. There are instances in which representatives of great powers, while putting their signatures on international agreements with solemn faces and cultured looks, have nurtured in their hearts the resolve to go back on their pledges at the first opportunity of furthering their national interests. And when all this is going on a vast scale there are very few who dare to raise the voice of truth and awaken the benumbed conscience of humanity. Sermons on morality are directed at others only and not at their own people and their own selves, however heinous their own crimes may be. It seems as if the conscience of humanity has been deadened.

This is a horrifying and detestable situation indeed and it is extremely painful for me to delineate upon it. The glaring moral vices I have referred to above are sufficient to show the depths of the abyss of moral degradation to which we have stooped. In fact the entire humanity is suffering from the festering sores of moral depravity. The virus has spread all

over the body-social, and governments and parliaments, courts and chambers of law, radio and the press, universities and educational institutions, banks and commercial combines have, in different degrees, become infected with its venom. The greatest tragedy of all is that even knowledge, learning and science, which are the most precious assets of mankind and its common heritage, have been poisoned and are being callously harnessed for the very annihilation of mankind. Resources which Providence has bestowed upon mankind are being frittered away in mutual wrangles and feuds and the noble qualities of courage, sacrifice, generosity, patience and resolution, have been yoked to the service of vicious ends.

It is obvious that social evils make their appearance on a vast scale only when moral degradation of the individuals is steep, when the grip of the moral values becomes lax and when fidelity to the standards of discipline is shattered. You cannot conceive of a society possessing a majority of morally robust individuals and collectively exhibiting signs of moral corruption. It is inconceivable that a community of virtuous people should entrust its leadership to a group of unscrupulous persons and remain passive spectators when their communal, national and international affairs are conducted in flagrant violation of moral principles. Therefore, if the peoples of the world are exhibiting on a large scale the seamy side of human nature through their collective institutions and policies, that can only lead us to the view that, in spite of all its intellectual and material progress, mankind is passing through a period of intense moral decadence which has gripped by far the greatest majority of human beings. It is better to frankly confess about this situation than hide our heads, ostrich-like, in the deceptive hey of polished phrases, varnished words and meaningless platitudes. No amount of prankish prattle or window-dressing can hide the rot. Nay, that will do positive harm. For, if this state of affairs persists, the time is not far off when humanity will meet with a colossal disaster and will plunge headlong into an era of all-pervading darkness.

Now, if we do not wish to make a blind rush for that evil day, we should look for the primary source from where the present evil is emanating with all the fury of a flood. And since it is a moral crisis it must obviously be traced in the contemporary moral systems, followed to by the people of the world. Attitude and behaviour have their roots in the ethical beliefs and moral concepts of the people. In the final analysis the ultimate forces responsible for the malaise will be found only there. The question, therefore, arises: What are the contemporary moral systems which are fashioning the life-pattern of the individual and the society? When we analyse this question closely we find that all these systems broadly fall under two categories:

Systems which are based on belief in God and life-after-death; and systems which are devoid of any idea of God and arise from secular sources.

Let us now examine both these broad approaches to morality and find out the modes of their expression and their respective effects.

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO MORALITY

a) Shades of Religious Morality

Ethical conceptions based on belief in God and life- after-death are determined by the nature of man's ideas about God and life-hereafter, Our examination of the problem shall proceed as under:

(i) Polytheistic Morality

A great majority of human beings who believe in God are guilty of associating other deities with the One True God Who is the Creator of the universe and man. They have invested beings other than God, with certain powers concerning their own day-to-day life, although all such powers belong to God alone. They have drawn a wishful and imaginary picture of these godlings and have attributed to them some or all "divine"

powers. They commit sins hoping that these godlings would secure them forgiveness. Like unbridled animals such individuals roam about and graze in the pastures of life as they please, indifferent to the rights of others and neglectful of their own duties and obligations, making no distinction between things lawful and unlawful. In exchange for a handful of offerings, these godlings, they assume, would guarantee them salvation. Even if they go out to commit burglary, the policemen fall asleep through the courtesy of these godlings! It appears as if an agreement has been entered into between these people and their patron-gods to the effect that these people shall hold favourable nice belief about the godlings and shall propitiate them by occasional offerings and in lieu thereof the godlings have undertaken to look after the affairs of these individuals to their best advantage in this world, and to intercede with God on their behalf in the hereafter pleading that these persons had been under their protection and should not, therefore, be made to suffer in any way. In certain cases even the need of intercession may not arise, for someone else has atoned their sins in advance.

These polytheistic beliefs have reduced to absurdity the doctrine of life-after-death with the result that the whole structure of morality built up by religion has crumbled to dust. Though many moral teachings of religions are still preserved in the pages of religious literature and are endowed with all outward show of respect, nevertheless, beliefs of the nature mentioned above have provided innumerable avenues of escape from the necessity of fulfilling the moral obligations, and that too in such a wonderful way that whichever avenue of escape they choose to take, they are always sure of reaching invariably the goal of salvation.

Leaving aside such perverted beliefs, we find that even where the doctrine of belief in God and life-after- death has retained its original purity of form, its demands and requirements have been restricted to a very narrow sphere of man's individual life and the entire gamut of sociocultural life has been excluded from its active jurisdiction. A few acts, a

few ceremonies, a few rites and rituals and a few restrictions in the sphere of individual and family life are all that God appears to demand of His believers and, in exchange for these offerings, He has pre-pared for them a soothing Paradise. If they fulfil these demands in relation to God, they are at liberty to pursue other affairs of this world as they wish. If they fail to carry out even these 'easy' religious duties, they can still hope for Divine forgiveness which will throw open to them the gates of Paradise and secure for them unrestricted en-trance therein despite their heavy load of sins. This narrow and distorted concept of religion has greatly circumscribed the field of religious practices, as a result of which most of the important spheres of human life have become excluded from the guidance and control of religion. Moreover, even in this narrow domain of religious life, there is an escape from moral discipline and some people do not hesitate to take advantage of this leeway.

(ii) Morality of Asceticism

There is another group of religious people who are free from the above mentioned perverted notions, who hold sincerely to the belief in God, and harbour no false illusion about life-after-death. Such people are blessed with undoubted moral purity and a high and noble character, but, generally speaking, their narrow conception about religion and spiritual life have made them ineffective. They adopt an attitude of indifference to the practical problems of life, and either confine their activities to a few specific acts which engross them in cleansing and purifying their souls so that they may be able to hear voices from the Unseen and catch glimpses of the Divine Being in this world of matter. They think that the path of salvation lies not through the rough and tumble of life but somewhere on its outskirts, so that they may just touch it and escape without coming into full contact with it. According to them, the only way of attaining proximity to God is to mould's few outer aspects of life in the pattern furnished by religion, to purify the soul by using some useful methods, and to pass their

lives in meditation and contemplation, in religious exercises and so-called spiritual practices, as if God wanted them to develop extra-sensory powers and to grow into something super-human, and as if He has sent to this earth human beings equipped with all the moral and material qualities to live here not as human beings made of flesh and bones and inspired by moral and social ideals but like jinn or angels renouncing the world in totality. This attitude is in radical violation of the entire scheme of nature and is a virtual revolt against the Will of God as immanent in His Creation. The greatest harm done to humanity by this wrong concept of religion is that it has removed from practical life some of those individuals whom God had endowed with high moral qualities, thus leaving the field or worldly affairs mostly for persons of inferior moral calibre.

This, in brief, is the situation obtaining in the religious world. The greater part of humanity has been deprived of the moral force which comes from belief in God and life-after-death. As against this the minority which is in possession of this force, has voluntarily withdrawn itself from the leadership and guidance of mankind, presenting the spectacle of a battery which has exhausted itself through misuse.

(b) Morality without Religion

The ethical code adhered to by most of those persons and nations which wield power and are directing the affairs of humanity today is devoid of any conception of God and life-after-death. This is not accidental, for the ethical values of humanity have been deliberately divested by these people of the idea of God and the life-hereafter. Indeed, they have openly refused to accept the guidance of God in ethical matters. Although the greater part of them do profess one religion or the other, they have reduced their religious faith to a few norms of individual and personal life, a sort of private belief which every individual should carefully keep to himself alone. They believe that religion should have no concern with the collective life of humanity. There is no need, therefore, for them to turn

to any supernatural guidance for the direction of human affairs. This view began to influence the life and thought of the people and social movements emerged during the nineteenth century to organize life on a morality without religion. Dr, Flex Adler of Columbia University was one of the pioneers of the movement. The movement was initiated in America in 1876. The basic creed of the ethical movement was expressed in the following words in the statement of objectives of the American Ethical Union, a federation of six ethical societies of America:

'To assert the supreme importance of the ethical factor in all relations of life, personal, social, national and international, apart from any theological or metaphysical considerations." The movement also spread to England where a Union of Ethical Societies was formed. The society later merged itself in the Ethical Union in 1928. Its main object was stated to be: "To promote by all lawful means the study of ethical principles; to advocate a religion of human fellowship and service, based upon the principle that the supreme aim of religion is the love of goodness, and that moral ideas and the moral life are independent of beliefs as to the ultimate nature of things and a life-after-death; and, by purely human and material means, to help men to love, know, and do the right in all relations of life."

These words fully represent the views of the upholders of secularism and also fairly reflect the mind of the people who wield power and control the destinies of the people in the modern world. Most of them have, in practice, deprived their ethics of the idea of God and of Life-here-after and freed themselves from every obligation to follow the guidance of religion in the sphere of social morality.

Now we shall try to review briefly the ethical philosophies and standards which the leading western philosophers have developed after freeing their thought from the grip of religion.

A RAPID LOOK AT THE SECULAR MORAL PHILOSOPHIES

The Highest Good or the Ultimate End of Human Conduct

The first basic question of ethical philosophy is:

What is the supreme good the attainment of which should be the life-purpose of man, the goal of all his endeavours, the summum bonum to which human conduct is to be directed and in the light of which it may be judged as to what is good or evil, right or wrong, virtue or vice?

Man has not been able to find an agreed ethical standard. With some this standard is happiness, with others perfection and with yet others duty for the sake of duty.

If we take "happiness" as the highest good, a number of questions arise. What kind of happiness is it that is sought? Is it the happiness that follows the gratification of bodily and sensual desires, or that which a man feels when he is engaged in self-adornment from the viewpoint of art, aesthetics or spiritualism? Whose happiness is to be sought: the happiness of the individual, or of the society of which the individual is a member, or of the entire mankind, or simply the happiness of others?

Similarly, several questions arise if we take "perfection" as the supreme end. For example, what is the conception and standard of perfection? Whose perfection is to be sought; of the class or group to which one belongs, of the individual, of the society, of the nation or of the whole of humanity?

Similarly those who adhere to the view that "duty for the sake of duty" constitutes the moral standard cannot avoid certain searching questions: What in fact is this imperative? Who has laid it down? What is the rationale for its obedience?

Different answers have been given to each one of these questions by different groups of thinkers, and the answers are different, conflicting and even contradictory, in theory as well as in practice. Those who are at the helm of affairs in the

modern world—may they be rulers and administrators, generals of armies, judges of courts of law, legislatures, teachers engaged in training new generations, business magnates controlling the economic machinery, etc. have no agreed standard of values. Instead, every individual or group has its own separate standard and although working within the frame-work of the same culture each is wedded to a different ideal. There is no uniform and accepted summum bonum. With some it is personal happiness and it is this which determines their entire social conduct (Egoistic Eudemonism and in its crude form simple Hedonism). In spite of this, we are deceived by their cultured appearance and fall into the delusion that they can suitably serve as administrators, judges, ministers, teachers, or as other similar public functionaries. Side by side with these people there are others who regard as their objective the happiness and well-being of the specific group with whom they are bound by ties of affection and interest (Utilitarianism). For them this is the supreme good and to strive for it constitutes real virtue. This viewpoint makes them dangerous for the rest of mankind. And yet their out ward decency induces us to take them for gentlemen. Similar situations confront us when we consider the cases of those who regard "perfection" as the ultimate good or those who believe in "duty for duty's sake". Their dignified appearance hardly bears any affinity with their moral values and this misleads the people. The result is that despite loud protestations of morality, these conflicting notions and the dual standards employed by the leaders of the modern civilization have wrought havoc in human life. And the root lies in the confusion of moral values and concepts and the lack of a universally accepted standard which is in keeping with the realities of human existence.

Knowledge of Good and Evil

The next important problem of moral philosophy is to discover the means whereby we may distinguish the good from the evil. What are the real means to obtain knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong? How to find out virtue and vice?

What is the correct source of this knowledge? Mankind has no agreed answer to this question either. Everybody plays a different tune. Some say that human experience is the only reliable source of our knowledge of good and evil that this source consists of the knowledge of laws of life and conditions of existence; others say that it is intuition, and still others claim that it is reason.

We are again confronted with a confused situation. If we hold that the above mentioned criteria are the sources of our knowledge of moral values, it automatically becomes the first principle of ethics that there should be no absolute standard of morality and that, like a shapeless fluid, ethics should follow the line of least resistance and take all forms according to the shape of the vessel that contains it. This would lead us to pure relativism.

To arrive at true knowledge by means of human experience alone it is essential that full data and complete information should be available at one place and then some omniscient and perfectly balanced mind should deduce conclusions therefrom. But neither of these two pre-requisites can be fulfilled. First of all, human experience has not yet attained perfection. Data are inadequate; knowledge of experience is imperfect; and its flow being continuous we are not in a position to be clear about the exact fund of experience which would suffice to reveal the reality to our unwary eyes.

Secondly, whatever fund of human experience has accumulated so far, its different cross-sections have their own specialists and experts, who deduce conclusions in their narrow and limited field according to their vision and peculiar mental make-up, what to say of their prejudices and predilections. The question now arises; is it possible to regard such conclusions, based as they are on imperfect vision and partial experience, as correct? If not, how prudent and fair it would be to consider this source sufficient to yield a reliable knowledge of good and evil?

The same is true of the laws of life and of the conditions of human existence. Either we should wait until such time when our knowledge of these laws and conditions becomes so perfect as to enable us to build up our code of good and evil. Or, in view of the present imperfection and incompleteness of our knowledge, different individuals should try to build up their own codes of good and evil according to their own limited fields, prejudices and intellectual levels. But this would perhaps necessitate a change, almost every morning, in their ethical norms. For, with the discovery of every fresh instalment of knowledge, values will change with the result that what is good today may become evil tomorrow and vice versa. Thus, we would be caught in the whirlpool of sheer moral relativism and utter confusion.

Reliance on reason and intuition presents similar difficulties. No doubt, human reason is capable, within certain limits, of distinguishing good from evil, and every individual has been endowed with it in some measure. Similarly the knowledge of good and evil is, to some extent, intuitive, because human conscience instinctively feels uneasy in the presence of evil. But neither of them is sufficient by itself to be taken as an authoritative and reliable source of our knowledge of moral values. Indeed, whichever is uncritically accepted as self-sufficient, it will fail us before we reach the journey's end. It may give us knowledge but not wisdom. Our information will remain imperfect, biased, limited to certain fields, distorted and misbalanced and even contradictory. The variety of interpretations would be bewildering. A commonly agreed and universally accepted standard will continue to elude our grip.

This chaos, to which I have been referring, is not confined to learned treatises and philosophic discourses only, but is fully reflected in practical life, in the civilizations and cultures of the world. People who are actively engaged in building up human civilization, whether as leader or as followers, are all turning to these diverse sources to know what is good or evil, and which is right or wrong, with the result that the good of one

individual or group is in conflict with the good of other individuals or groups. This chaos has left human morality without any solid basis. Things which the world had always held to be morally reprehensible and those which were, for ages, regarded as crimes and sins have now become either absolute or relative virtues, at least with some groups of human beings. Similarly, what mankind once considered to be meritorious acts of virtue are laughed at today as crass stupidity. Several groups are going against these, not only without any sense of guilt or shame but rather with boastfulness. In days gone by, if anyone told a lie, he still believed that truth and no falsehood was the standard of morality. But certain modern ideologies have turned lying into a virtue and have given it the august name of propaganda. A whole science of broadcasting falsehood has been developed and many a nation is practising it on a large scale in the sacred name of diplomacy. Similar is the case with other evils, which have all along been recognized as evils but have now, thanks to new-fangled philosophies, been raised to the dignity of virtues, either in an absolute or a relative sense.

Sanction Behind Moral Law

The third fundamental question of ethics is: What is the sanction behind the moral law? In response to this problem the advocates of the theories of happiness and perfection state that the virtues leading to happiness or perfection are self-enforcing and the vices making for sorrow or imperfection are repugnant to human nature, and that, therefore, the ethical law does not stand in need of any external authority. Another group also arrives at the same conclusion but through a different line of reasoning. It says that the law of duty is the self-imposed law of "practical reason", and hence it does not need any force external to itself, A third group holds that political power is the real sanction behind moral law and vests all those powers and functions to the state, which originally belonged to Almighty. A fourth school assigns this status to society. All these replies have created and are still creating disorder and confusion in the

life of humanity. The first two carried individual liberty to such irresponsible extremes that the very fabric of corporate and social life was threatened with subversion. The reaction came with the appearance of new social theories which either elevated the state to the status of an absolute divinity and reduced the individual to the position of an abject slave or a cog in the lifeless machine of social organization, or left to society as a whole the decision of what is morally good and bad for an individual. In reality, however, neither the state nor the society as a whole is free from imperfections and susceptibility to error.

Motive of Moral Conduct

We are confronted with a similar situation when we come to the question of the motive which induces man to obey moral law even against his natural inclinations or personal interests? One school of thought says that desire for pleasure or fear of pain are sufficient to act as motives for this purpose; another group thinks that longing for perfection and a natural distaste for imperfections form the motive force. A third group relies on man's inborn respect for law; while a fourth group gives expression to the hope that the state constitutes the proper agency to reward acts virtuous and to punish acts contravening moral law. A fifth school lays emphasis on the rewards and punishments awarded by the society in the form of esteem or denunciation. Each of these answers to the basic question of motives finds a prominent place in one or the other contemporary ethical system. But even a cursory examination shows that all these motives can serve equally well as inducements to moral vice or moral good. In fact they may be more effective for evil than for good. In any case, they are wholly inadequate as basis for higher morality.

The foregoing brief and rapid survey of the contemporary moral scene makes it evident that the world is faced with widespread moral confusion. Having made himself independent of God, man has not been able to discover any alternative basis for building up his moral life with any degree

of satisfaction. All the basic ethical questions have become insoluble for him. He has neither been able to discover that supreme good which could serve as the object of all his endeavours and enable him to judge the right from the wrong, the virtue from the vice; nor has he discovered a satisfactory source for his knowledge of moral values. He has not even succeeded in securing for himself that sanction on the basis of which some noble, comprehensive and universal code of morality could be enforced; nor has he put his finger on that motive which could induce human beings to follow the path of truth and virtue and abstain from falsehood even in the face of adversity. Having rebelled against God, man tried arrogantly to solve these questions without His guidance, and he thought he had solved them. But it is precisely a result of this escape from the Lord that he is faced with a crisis which is threatening the very existence of human civilization.

This is the situation with which humanity is beset today. Has the time really not yet come when we should search for that true basis on which moral life might be happily built? This kind of search is not merely an academic one but is also a practical necessity and one of the most pressing needs of our times. The critical times through which we are passing have added infinitely to its importance. It is in view of this consideration that I am making my own submissions on the problem and I hope that those who are conscious of this need will give some deep thought to them.

ISLAMIC VIEWPOINT

After years of thought and reflection I have reached the conclusion that there is only one correct basis for morality and that is presented by Islam. Here we get an answer to all the basic ethical questions; an answer free from the weaknesses and fallacies from which the viewpoints expressed by secular and other religious philosophies alike suffer. The fundamental weakness of all these systems of ethics - religious or secular is that they fail to build up simultaneously a firm and integrated moral personality of the individual and a sound and healthy

organization of the body social. The situation is altogether different in respect of Islam. Here we find such comprehensive moral guidance as can ensure our progress to the highest pinnacle in every sphere of human life and activity. Islam gives us basic moral norms and values to guide and control the entire gamut of man's life. It gives a comprehensive code of behaviour for the individual and shows him the way to the highest possible moral excellence and also gives ethical principles on which the edifice of a truly righteous society can be raised and which, if accepted as the basis of individual and collective conduct, can save human life from the chaos and anarchy that have over taken it today. Let us now make an effort to appreciate the Islamic viewpoint.

First Questions

The first grave mistake which secular philosophers have committed in connection with ethics and moral values lies in starting their enquiry from the wrong place. Instead of beginning with first question, they have jumped into the middle and lodged themselves into a muddle. They have disturbed the sequence in which the question of the basis of morality should have been discussed. And once the order is disturbed nothing but confusion results. The question, what is the criterion of right and wrong for purposes of human conduct and what is the ultimate good for the realization of which man should direct his efforts is, in reality, a question which arises much later. The first problem to be settled is that of man's place and status in the universe. This problem enjoys priority over all others, because it would be meaningless to build up any ethical system without first deciding as to the real position of man in the universe. The question about standards of conduct will defy all solutions unless the status and the position of man are correctly determined. For example, if you have to determine your conduct in relation to a commodity and to decide how far and in what way it is rightful for you to utilize it for your benefit, you must, in the first instance, ascertain your legal status, vis-a-vis, the said commodity. If it belongs to another person and

your position is merely that of a trustee, your conduct must, of necessity, be different from what it would be if you were the owner of it and had full proprietary rights over it. And that is not all. Not only the question of status is decisive in determining the nature of your conduct vis-a-vis the commodity in question but on this very point will rest another very fundamental question; who would be the proper authority to determine your conduct in relation to it, i.e., whether you yourself enjoy this authority, or it would be enjoyed by the person whose agent you are.

Islam takes up this very question before anything else and tells us clearly that the status of man in this world is that of an 'abd' (God's servant and slave) who is also Khalifat-ul-Allah (Allah's deputy and vicegerent). All things in the world with which he comes in contact belong to God. Even his own body and the capacities with which he is endowed are not in fact his own, but are a trust from the Lord.

God has appointed him as his vicegerent giving him the power to use these objects for his benefit. And in this lies his test and trial. The final results of this test will not be declared in this world but only at the time when individuals and nations and, indeed, the whole of mankind shall have finished their career on the earth and the consequences and effects of their actions and strivings shall have become fully manifest. It is then that God will examine the account of each human being and will decide as to who has duly carried out the duties of His stewardship and who has not. And this examination will not be confined to any one thing or one department of life, but will cover the entire range of a person's individual and social conduct.

It will be an examination of all the faculties of his individual and body with which he has been endowed and also of every kind of authority and power over external objects which has been delegated to him.

This being man's real position in the world, it logically follows that he is not the master—but the agent and the deputy.

His power and authority are bound to be limited. Sovereignty belongs to God alone; man is His vicegerent and the only moral course open to him is to fulfil the task which the Sovereign has assigned to him. He is not totally free to determine his own behaviour, the standards of right and wrong must be taken from the Sovereign. Man has no absolute right to determine the course of his own conduct - the course of conduct has been laid down by the Lord, Man's job is to faithfully and scrupulously pursue the mission assigned to him. The code of conduct is not to be formulated by man, he has to take it from God and follow it. Creator is the law-giver; man has to act within that framework which the Sovereign has laid for him. Once this position is accepted and the nature of God-man relationship is clearly understood all ethical questions which have been agitating the minds of philosophers from time immemorial find appropriate solutions. These solutions are clear, precise and definite. And they are based on reality. They are universal and eternal.

Foundations of Morality

If the position assigned to man by Islam is accepted by him, then it becomes automatically settled, that;

(i) to emerge successfully from the test prescribed by God and to attain His pleasure constitute the supreme good and the ultimate objective of human life;

(ii) the criterion of right or wrong for human conduct lies in determining how far it helps or hinders man in the attainment of this supreme good; the real source of man's knowledge of good and evil is found in the guidance furnished by God through His prophets - other sources of knowledge can be employed only as auxiliaries and aids to it, but none of them deserves to be treated as its substitute; and the real sanction for morality lies in the love for seeking the pleasure of God or inculcating the fear of God - the real motive-force which would impel us to observe the canons of morality and to abstain from immoral conduct would be the love of God, the desire to seek

His Pleasure, the fear of His Displeasure and the consequences - good or otherwise - which are to follow in the Hereafter.

In this way not only all the basic moral problems are solved satisfactorily, but the system of morality reared on this foundation also duly incorporates within itself all the best from the moral ideas presented by philosophers and moral theorists from time to time, assigning to them their due place within its framework. The weakness of the ethical systems expounded by philosophers and the sages is not that they are totally devoid of truth and reality but that they regard some particular aspect of truth as the whole truth. They have fallen a prey to the fallacy of regarding the part as the whole, and as this apparently left many gaps and loopholes which they had to fill by drawing upon imagination and falling on materials of doubtful validity, thus introducing a large slice of unreality in their systems and making the over-all picture distorted and disproportionate. On the other hand, Islam presents the whole truth and in this whole truth all partial truths, which remain imperfect in isolation from one another, are assimilated and synthesized into a perfect unity, nothing superfluous, nothing lacking.

Happiness has a place in Islam, but it is the happiness which follows the observance of the law laid down by God. It is physical as well as mental, artistic as well as spiritual; it relates to the individual as much as to the group, the nation and, indeed, to humanity as a whole. All these different kinds of happiness are not conceived by Islam as antagonistic to one another but mutually coherent and harmonious In Islam, there is a place for perfection also. It consists in emerging successful from the test prescribed by God in the trial of existence; and it relates to the individual, the nation and, indeed, to the whole of mankind. The correct ethical conduct for an individual, therefore, is to advance himself towards perfection and to assist and help others in the same direction.

Kant's standpoint also finds a place of honour in Islam and here the concept of Duty also gets the sheet-anchor which it lacks in Kant's own system of thought.

The "categorical imperative" of which Kant wrote, but which he could not elucidate, is in reality God's Law. God has determined its form and it is entitled to obedience solely in virtue of being His law. Indeed, moral goodness is nothing other than absolute and willing submission to the Law of God.

Source of Moral Values

Similarly, as regards the source of the knowledge of moral good and evil, Islam does not reject altogether those sources to which the philosophers turn, but merely incorporates them at their proper place in its comprehensive system. What it really rejects is that any one or all of them put together (devoid of Divine Guidance) can be taken as the final and absolute source of knowledge. The knowledge of good and evil provided to us by Divine Guidance constitutes the real knowledge; while empirical knowledge derived from the observation of laws of life and conditions of existence, rational knowledge, and intuitive knowledge, all are its collaborators and aids. What Divine Guidance states to be good receives confirmation from the experience of humanity. The laws of life bear equal testimony to its being good and man's reason as well as intuition lead him to the same conclusion. It is thus the Divine Guidance, and not these sources of knowledge, which forms the criterion of truth. In case any inference drawn from the historical experience of mankind or from the laws of life, or any opinion formed on the basis of reason or intuition, runs counter to Divine Guidance, credence will definitely be given to Divine Guidance, and not to that inference or opinion. The chief merit of having an authentic and reliable criterion is precisely this; our knowledge becomes disciplined and we are saved from the chaos and anarchy which result from the absence of an agreed criterion as well as from giving license to every individual to fashion and follow his own opinions.

Sanction and Motives

The question of the sanction of moral imperatives and that of the proper motive-force behind them is also solved on the same lines. None of the solutions suggested by the philosophers is rejected altogether. They are corrected, modified and assigned their due place, after being lifted out of the fields to which they had been wrongly extended. They are, thus, fitted into the framework of a wider system and thus are assigned a proper place. God's Law, because of its Divine origin, is self-enforcing. Sanction for it exists in the mind of the believer who finds happiness in seeking God's Pleasure and is desirous to attain the standard of perfection which is to be attained by proximity to Him. Similarly, this sanction is inherent in the community of the faithful and in the State which is based on Divine Law. The motive that leads the believer to obey the moral law is his sense of duty as well as his love of truth and hatred of falsehood; he is fully conscious of both of these: and this constitutes the essence of belief. Fear of God's punishment and hope of His Pleasure and reward also act an equally powerful motives in inducing obedience to moral law.

Thus, Islam sets at rest the anarchy of thought and conduct which results from the assumption that there is no power above man and from the attempt to build up a whole ethical system on the basis of this unreal assumption. Islam exposes the fallacy of this approach and states, at the very outset, that morality can have its basis only in God's Will. This being the starting point, Islam very clearly states its concept of God, which, in fact, constitutes the real source of all its moral thinking.

Islamic Concept of God and Its Consequence for Morality

The concept of God which Islam expounds implies that He is the Absolute Sovereign, Master, and Creator of man and of the entire universe and there is no one who shares with Him in any of the prerogatives and attributes of Divinity. There is no

one to exercise over Him the least iota of influence and to get his recommendation accepted, except as a matter of absolute Grace from Him and that too if one comes to Him purely as a suppliant. The success or failure of every man depends upon his own conduct. No person can atone for another person; neither can the burden of anyone be placed upon another's shoulders; nor can anyone receive the reward for another person's good deeds. There is no favouritism or partiality with God so that He may have greater interest in any individual, family, clan, race or nation. All human beings are equal in His eyes. There is one moral code for all and the only excellence that matters with Him is moral excellence. He is Merciful and likes mercy; He is Generous and likes generosity; He is Forgiving and likes forgiveness; He is Just and likes justice. He is absolutely free from all injustice, narrow-mindedness, cruelty, wickedness, callousness, bigotry and partiality, and therefore likes only those who are free from these vices. All greatness is His exclusive right and, therefore, arrogance in any human being, however great, causes His displeasure. All godly qualities and divine attributes belong to Him alone. He, therefore, dislikes any one behaving in an absolute manner towards another person or group of persons. He is the Sole Owner of whatever there is in the heavens or the earth, and what appears to us as belonging to anyone among us is really in the nature of a trust from Him. Therefore, any creature who sets himself up as an independent authority, or is presumptuous enough to lay the basic law for others, or claims obedience in his own right from other persons or groups of persons, automatically puts himself in the wrong position, for God alone is the Lord of all and the good of all lies in explicitly obeying Him. Again, He is the Benefactor and is entitled to the gratitude and love of the beneficiaries. He is the Bestower of all gifts and it is, therefore, His right that His gifts should be utilised in accordance with His Will. He is Just and this makes it incumbent upon His creatures to hope for rewards and to fear punishments He is Omniscient and knows also the hidden intentions of human hearts, therefore, no one can deceive Him

by an outward show of virtue or by a mere affectation of piety. He is All-Encompassing and hence nobody can harbour the delusion that he can commit crimes with impunity.

A Perfect Ethical System

Reflect deeply over this concept of God. From this conception there naturally emerges into shape a perfect ethical system for man, and this system is free from all those defects which are to be found in the ethics of idolatrous religions and of secular creeds. Here there are no back doors of escape from moral responsibility, nor is there any room for those cruel philosophies whose protagonists divide humanity into warring sections on the basis of the class, clan, country or vested interests, behaving as the very embodiments of goodness and nobility in relation to one and as devils personified in respect of the other. Indeed, you will not find in this concept of God any basis for that double-faced morality under which no strength of character can be built up. Side by side with these merits of negative nature this concept of God has the positive merit of setting up moral excellence and of providing the noblest and most effective incentives for the moral effort of man.

In addition to the above merits, the idea that the test set by God is not confined to any one aspect of life or to any particular branch of human activity but extends to all aspects of life and all spheres of action enlarges the field of morality and makes it co-extensive with life. Man's reason, his powers of perception, his physical faculties, his ambitions and desires, indeed, the entire human personality, is covered by this test. Beyond that, it extends to man's relations with the external world, to his attitude towards everything that is to be found in it and his behaviour towards every person with whom he comes into contact. And above all, his supreme test lies in the spirit in which he performs his duty, namely, whether he does everything with a feeling of responsibility to God - with the consciousness that he is a dutiful servant of his Creator or accepts someone else as his master, or acts independently,

following his own desires. This all- embracing conception of morality is free from the distortions which are the natural result of a narrow and limited concept of religion. It carries a man forward in every sphere of life, indicates to him his moral responsibilities in every field and gives him those principles of morality the observance of which can lead to success in that test which God has prescribed for life's march towards destiny. The most sublime and the most comprehensive ideal of moral excellence and of providing the noblest and most effective incentives for the moral effort of man.

Horizon Enlarged

The idea that the ultimate results of this test and the final outcome of our moral efforts shall not be known in this life but in life-after-death and that true success or failure shall be that which pertains to the next world and not merely to this one, radically alters our outlook about our life in this world and its affairs. With this belief man does not regard the results that manifest themselves in this world as the true and final criterion of good and evil, right and wrong, truth and falsehood, success and failure, and, consequently, the question of obeying or disobeying the moral law does not depend on his estimation of them. A man who adheres to this concept will always be steadfast in observing the laws of morality, whether its consequences bring him happiness or misery and whether they lead to worldly gain or loss. This does not mean that the material consequences of his actions shall be wholly irrelevant to him. No. Rather, their role shall be subservient to the success in the life-hereafter, which alone shall form the decisive factor. His decision to choose a certain way in preference to another will not rest on the calculation whether it is productive of pleasure, happiness or gain in the present preliminary stage of life but on the expectation of what it will lead to in life's final stage. Hence, his moral principles shall remain un-changed under all circumstances and his character shall remain immune from hasty and unfounded shifts and alterations.

Of course, his moral outlook shall be dynamic and progressive; that is to say, his moral conceptions shall expand in their scope with the development of civilization and the advancement of society. His moral principles, however, shall remain unaffected by changes in external conditions and circumstances of life; In other words, though progressive, he will not be a moral weathercock, having no set of uniform ethical norms. His principles would not be like shifting sands, nor would he be like a vessel without a rudder. Instead, he will have firm grounds to stand upon, and firm standards to act as a measure of progress he attains.

Thus, in the moral domain of human life, the Islamic concept of the life-hereafter produces two important effects which are not obtainable from any other source:

First, it lends to morality a basis which is strong and unshakable;

Secondly, it imparts stability and firmness to human character and firm foundations for human society.

Truth can have, say, ten different results in this world, and an opportunist with his eyes on these results can adopt ten different courses, varying his strategy to suit the expected results; while in the life-hereafter truth must, of necessity, have only one consequence and a believer, with his attention centred on it, will invariably adopt only one course without the least anxiety for immediate gain or loss. If we go only by the material consequences and results which reveal themselves in this world, good and evil cease to have any definite meaning and permanent significance. For, consequences make the same thing appear sometimes good and sometimes evil, and in the pursuit of such a mirage the character of the pursuant also goes on changing its pattern. But if the outlook is focused on the consequences of the life-here- after, good and evil stand clearly defined and it becomes impossible for the believer in that life to change his character if good temporarily happens to produce unpleasant results or evil appears to produce desirable consequences.

The Mission of Man

Besides the above, the Islamic concept that man is God's vicegerent on earth and that all the powers that he possesses are held by him in that capacity, sets for him the end of life as well as the means for realization of that end. It follows logically from this tenet that all conduct based on the assumption that man is an independent being, free to regulate his own affairs in accordance with his uncontrolled desires and unbridled interests, is incorrect and that the right conduct consists in subjecting oneself to God's Will and in accepting the limit laid down by Him. On the one hand, this conception makes it incumbent upon man to abstain rigorously from that behaviour which smacks even remotely of rebellion against God or of allegiance to any one besides Him or of haughtiness, since such behaviour amounts to a direct negation of his status as the vicegerent of God. On the other hand, this conception ensures that man's utilization of the material possessions bestowed by God and of his own God-given powers, as well as his leadership and authority over other human beings, shall be wholly in accordance with that conduct which God, the real Master and Sovereign of the world, has been pleased to prescribe in relation to His kingdom and His subjects. This is the logical demand of his status as vicegerent, for no viceroy can truly be considered a viceroy unless he adheres strictly to the commands and the policy of the Sovereign. It also follows from this principle that man has been charged to utilize, in accordance with the Divine Will and Pleasure, all the powers and faculties which have been given to him and all the resources that have been placed at his disposal. In other words, man falsifies his position as the vicegerent of God not merely by acting contrary to God's Will in the use of his powers and the material resources of the world, but also if he fails to utilize those powers and resources or wastes them or ignores the duties assigned to him by the Sovereign in relation to them. Furthermore, it also follows from this concept that the collective life of mankind should be organized in such a manner that all human beings, i.e., all the vicegerents of God,

should co-operate with one another in the execution and fulfilment of the responsibilities laid upon them, and that in the social organization of mankind there should be no such flaw which might render it possible for one individual or group to usurp the vicegerency of the other or to hinder its proper functioning except in the case of those individuals or groups who set themselves up against God and thus falsify their position as vicegerents. It goes without saying that this attitude is bound to produce sense of responsibility and moral consciousness in the followers of this ideology. This mission of man naturally follows from the principle of human vicegerency and sets the moral goal for man. The natural demand of man's status as God's vicegerent is that the purpose of his life should be to fulfil the Will of God on earth and that the goal of his moral endeavours should be:

to enforce the Divine Law in that cross section of world affairs the management of which has been entrusted to him by God; to create and maintain conditions in which peace, justice and virtue may flourish: to suppress and eradicate evil and disorder in all their forms: and to foster those virtues which are liked by God and which He desires should prevail over this world and its inhabitants.

This ethical outlook stands in sharp contrast with not only the purposes set forth for human life by Hedonism, Utilitarianism, Empiricism, Materialism, Nationalism, and other secular creeds but also against those goals which men of religion generally prescribe under the influence of mistaken and narrow views of spirituality. Between these two exaggerated extremes, the concept of the vicegerency of man places before mankind the truest and the best purpose bringing into full play human faculties and capacities and utilizing them for creating and developing the healthiest society and civilization. In it there is freedom as well as restraint, life fulfilment as well as spiritual perfection.

These are the first principles given by Islam for raising a healthy structure of human morality. Islam is not a national religion. It is not wedded to any particular race or region. Nor

is it the sole monopoly of my particular group of people. It is the common legacy of the whole of mankind. Everyone who is mindful of his own good and interest as also of mankind should reflect whether the basis furnished by Islam for human morality is better than those provided by mystic religions and secular philosophical systems. If he is satisfied that the basis furnished by Islam is more sound than that provided by any other moral system, then no false prejudices should stand in the way of its acceptance by him. He should be the ally of none but truth.

MORAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

Moral sense is inborn in man and through the ages it has served as the common man's standard of moral behaviour, approving certain qualities and disapproving others. While this instinctive faculty may vary from person to person, human conscience has given a more or less uniform verdict in favour of certain moral qualities as being good and declared certain others as bad.

Universally Accepted Values

On the side of moral virtues, justice, courage, bravery and truthfulness have always elicited praise and history does not record any period worth the name in which false-hood, injustice, dishonesty and breach of trust may have been upheld; fellow-feeling, compassion, fidelity, and magnanimity have always been valued while selfishness, cruelty, miserliness and bigotry have never received the approbation of the human society; men have always appreciated perseverance, determination and courage and have never approved of impatience, fickle- mindedness, cowardice and imbecility. Dignity, restraint, polite-ness and amiability have throughout the ages been counted among virtues, whereas haughtiness, misbehaviour and rudeness have never found recognition as good moral qualities. Persons having a sense of responsibility

and devotion to duty have always won the highest regard of men; never have people who are incompetent, slothful and lacking in sense of duty been looked upon with approval. Similarly in respect of the standard of good and bad in the collective behaviour of society as a whole, the verdict has always been almost unanimous. Only that society has been looked upon as worthy of honour and respect which possesses the virtues of organization, discipline, mutual affection and fellow- feeling and has established a social order based on justice, freedom and equality of men. As opposed to this, dis-organization, indiscipline, anarchy, disunity, injustice and social imbalance have always been considered manifestations of decay and disintegration. Robbery, murder, larceny, adultery, fraud and graft have always been condemned. Slandering, scandal - mongering and black- mailing have never been considered wholesome social activities. Contrary to this, service and care of the aged, help of one's kith and kin, regard for neighbours, loyalty to friends, assistance to the weak, the destitute and the orphans, and nursing the sick are qualities which have always been highly valued ever since the dawn of civilization. Virtuous, polite, mild and sincere persons have always been welcomed. Individuals who are upright, honest, sincere, outspoken and dependable, whose deeds conform to their words, who are content with their own rightful possessions, who are prompt in the discharge of their obligations to others, who live in peace and let others live in peace and from whom nothing but good can be expected, have always formed the core of every healthy human society.

This shows that human moral standards are in fact universal and have been well-known to mankind through-out the ages, Good and evil are not myths to be hunted out. They are well-known realities and are equally understood by all. The sense of good and evil is inherent in the very nature of man. Hence, in the terminology of the Qur'an, virtue is called "Ma'ruf" (a well-known thing) and evil is designated as "Munkar" (an unknown thing); that is to say virtue is known to be desirable for every one and evil is not known to commend

itself in any way. This fact is mentioned by the Qur'an when it says:

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾ (الشمس)

"God has revealed to human nature the conscious-ness and cognition of good and evil." *(Al - Qur'an, 91: 8)*

Why Differences?

The question that now arises is: if the basic values of good and evil have been so well-known and there has virtually been a universal agreement about them, then why do varying patterns of moral behaviour exist in the world? Why are there so many and so conflicting moral philosophies? Why do certain moral standards contradict one another? What lies at the root of their differences? What is the unique position of Islam in the context of the prevailing ethical systems? On what grounds can we claim that Islam has a perfect moral system? And what exactly is the distinctive contribution of Islam in the realm of ethics? These questions are important and must be squarely faced; but justice cannot be done to them in the brief span of this talk. To cut a long story short, I shall briefly sum up some of those important points which strike us at the very outset when we under-take a critical examination of the contemporary ethical systems and the conflicting pattern of moral behaviour.

The present moral systems fail to integrate various moral virtues and norms by prescribing their specific limits and utility and assigning to them their proper place. That is why they fail to provide a balanced and coherent plan of social conduct.

The real cause of their differences seem to lie in the moral system offering different standards for good and bad actions and enunciating different means of distinguishing good from evil. Differences also exist in respect of the sanction behind the moral law and in regard to the motives which impel a person to follow it.

On deeper reflection we find that the grounds for these differences emerge from the conflicting views and concepts about the universe, the place of man in the universe, and the purpose of man's life. Various theories of ethics, philosophy and religion are but a record of the vast divergence of views of mankind on these vital questions: Is there a God of the Universe and if there is, He is One or are there many gods? What are Divine attributes? What is the nature of relationship between God and the human beings? Has He made any arrangements for guiding humanity through the rough and tumble of life or not? Is man answerable to Him or not? If he is, then what are the matters for which he is answerable? What is the ultimate aim of man's creation which he should keep in view throughout his life? Answers to these questions will determine the way of life, the ethical philosophy and the pattern of moral behaviour of the individual and the society.

It is difficult for me to take, in this brief talk, a stock of the various ethical systems prevalent in the world and indicate what solutions each one of them has proposed to these questions and what has been the impact of these answers on the moral evolution of the society believing in these concepts. Here I can confine myself to the Islam only and explain what answer it offers to these questions and what kind of moral system takes shape on the basis of this answer.

Islamic Concept of Life and Morality

The viewpoint of Islam, however, is that this universe is the creation of God Who is One. He created it and He alone is its unrivalled Master, Sovereign and Sustainer. The whole universe is functioning at His Divine Command. He is All-Wise, All-Powerful and Omniscient. He is the Knower of the manifest and the hidden. He is Subbuh and Quddus (that is, free from all defects, weaknesses and faults and is pure in every respect). His Godhood is free from partiality and injustice. Man is His creature, subject and servant and is born to serve and obey Him.

The correct course of life for man is to live in complete obedience to Him. It is not for man to determine the mode of worship and obedience; it is for God to decide this. God, being his Master, has raised from time to time Prophets for the guidance of humanity and has revealed His Books through them. It is the duty of man to take the code of his life from these sources of Divine Guidance. Man is answerable to God for all his actions in life. The time for rendering an account will be in the life-hereafter and not in this world. The short span of worldly life is really an opportunity to prepare for that great test. In this life all efforts of man should be centred on the object of soliciting the Pleasure and Blessings of God in the Hereafter. During this test every person is responsible for all his beliefs and actions. He, with all his faculties and potentialities, is on trial. There will be an impartial assessment of his conduct in life by a Being Who keeps a complete and accurate record not merely of his movements and actions and their influence on all that is in the world - from the tiniest speck of dust to the loftiest mountains - but also a record of his innermost ideas and feelings and intentions.

Goal of Moral Striving

This is Islam's fundamental attitude towards life. This concept of the universe and of man's place therein determines the real and ultimate good which should be the object of all the endeavours of mankind and which may be termed briefly as "seeking the Pleasure of God". This is the standard by which a particular mode of conduct is judged and classified as good or bad. This standard of judgement provides the nucleus around which the whole moral conduct should revolve. Man is not left like a ship without moorings, to be tossed about by the blows of wind and tides. This dispensation places a central, object before mankind and lays down values and norms for all moral actions. It provides us with a stable and flawless set of values which remains unaltered under all circumstances. Moreover, with making the "pleasure of God" as the object of man's life, the highest and noblest objective is set before humanity and

thus unlimited possibilities are opened for man's moral evolution, untainted at any stage by any shadow of narrow selfishness or bigoted race or nation-worship.

While providing a moral standard, Islam also furnishes us with means of determining good and evil conduct. It does not base our knowledge of vice and virtue on mere intellect, desire, intuition, or experience derived through the sense organs, which constantly undergo shifts and modifications and alterations and do not provide definite, categorical and unchanging standards of morality. It provides us with a definite source, the Divine Revelation, as embodied in the Book of God and the Sunnah (way of life) of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). This source prescribes a standard of moral conduct that is permanent and universal and holds good in every age and under all circumstances. The moral code of Islam covers a wide field, including the details of domestic life as well as broad aspects of national and international behaviour. It guides us at every stage in life. These regulations imply the widest application of moral principles in the affairs of our life and make us free from exclusive dependence on any other source of knowledge, except as an aid to this primary source.

Sanction Behind Morality

This concept of the universe and of man's place therein also furnishes the sanction that must lie at the back of every moral law, viz., the love and fear of God, the consciousness of accountability on the Day of Judgement, and the promise of eternal bliss and reward in the life-hereafter. Although Islam wants to cultivate a powerful and strong mass opinion which may induce individuals and groups to abide by the principles of morality laid down by it and also aims at the evolution of a political system which would enforce the moral law, as far as possible, through its legislative and executive power, the moral law of Islam does not really depend on these external pressures alone. It relies upon the inherent urge for good in every man which is derived from belief in God and the Day of Judgement. Before laying down any moral injunctions Islam seeks to

firmly implant in man's heart the conviction that his dealings are with God, Who sees him at all times and in all places; that he may hide himself from the whole world but not from Him; that he may deceive everyone under the sun but cannot deceive God; that he can flee from the grip of anyone else but not from God's; that while the world can see man's outward life only, God probes into his inner-most intentions and desires, that while he may, in his short sojourn on this earth, do whatever he likes but in any event he has to die one day and present himself before the Divine court of justice where no ingenious pleading, recommendation, misrepresentation, deception or fraud will be of any avail and where his future will be decided with complete impartiality and justice. There may or may not be any police, law court or jail in this world to enforce the observance of these moral injunctions and regulations, but this belief, firmly rooted in the heart, is the real force at the back of the moral law of Islam which helps in getting it enforced. If popular opinion and the coercive powers of the state exist to give it support so much the better; otherwise, this faith alone can keep a Muslim individual and a Muslim community on the straight path of virtue provided the spark of genuine faith dwells in his heart.

Motives and Incentives

This concept of Islam about man and his place in the universe also provides those motivating forces which can inspire a person to act in conformity with the moral law. The fact that a man voluntarily and willingly accepts God as his Creator and the obedience of God as the mode of his life and strives to seek His Pleasure in all his actions provides sufficient incentive to enable him to obey the commandments which he believes to be from God. Along with this, the belief in the Day of Judgement and the belief that whosoever obeys Divine commands is sure to have a good life in the hereafter, the eternal life, whatever difficulties and handicaps he may have to face in this transitory phase of his existence, provides a strong incentive for virtuous life. On the other hand, the belief that

whoever violates the commandments of God in this world, shall have to bear eternal punishment, however superficially nice a life he may have led in this temporary abode, is an effective deterrent against violation of moral Law. If this hope and fear are deeply rooted in one's heart they will provide a strong motive force to inspire one to virtuous deeds even on occasions when worldly consequences may appear to be very damaging and harmful, and it will keep one away from evil even on occasions when it looks extremely attractive and profitable.

This clearly indicates that Islam possesses a distinctive criterion of good and evil, its own source of moral law, and its own sanctions and motive force, and through them it enforces the well-known and generally recognized moral virtues in all spheres of life after, knitting them into a balanced and comprehensive scheme. Thus, it can be justifiably claimed that Islam possesses a perfect moral system of its own. This system has many distinguishing features and I shall refer to the three most significant of them, which, in my opinion, can be termed its special contribution to ethics.

Distinctive Features of Islamic Moral Order

By setting Divine Pleasure as the objective of man's life, it has furnished the highest possible standard of morality. This is bound to provide innumerable avenues for the moral evolution of humanity. By making Divine Revelation the primary source of knowledge it gives permanence and stability to the moral standards which afford a reasonable scope for genuine adjustments, adaptations and innovations though not for perversions, wild variations, atomistic relativism or moral fluidity. It provides a sanction for morality in the love and fear of God which will impel man to obey the moral law even without any external pressure. Through belief in God and the Day of Judgement, it furnishes a motive force which enables a person to adopt moral conduct with earnestness and sincerity, with all the devotion of his heart and soul. It does not, through a false sense of originality and innovation, provide any novel

moral virtues nor does it seek to minimise the importance of the well-known moral norms nor does it give exaggerated importance to some and neglect others without cause. It takes up all the commonly known moral virtues and with a sense of balance and proportion it assigns a suitable place and function to each one of them in the total scheme of life. It widens the scope of their application to cover every aspect of man's individual and collective life—his domestic associations, his civic conduct, legal, educational and social realms. It covers his life from home to society, from the dining- table to the battlefield and peace conferences, literally from the cradle to the grave. In short, no sphere of life is exempt from the universal and comprehensive application of the moral principles of Islam. It makes morality reign supreme and ensures that the affairs of life, instead of being dominated by selfish desires and petty interests, should be regulated by the norms of morality.

It stipulates for man a system of life which is based on all good and is free from all evil. It invokes the people not only to practice virtue but also to establish virtue and eradicate vice, to bid good and to forbid wrong. It wants that the verdict of conscience should prevail and virtue should not be subdued to play second fiddle to evil.

Those who respond to this call are gathered together into a community (Ummah) and given the name "Muslims". And the only object underlying the formation of this community (Ummah) is that it should make an organized effort to establish and enforce goodness and suppress and eradicate evil. It will be a day of mourning for this community and a bad day for the entire world if the efforts of this very community were at any time directed towards establishing evil and suppressing good.

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Moral Foundations of the Islamic Movement

Moral Foundations of the Islamic Movement

[This speech was given on 21 April 1945 at Darul Islam Pathankot in the last session of the All India Meet of members of Jamaat-e-Islami]

Respected friends, you are aware that the ultimate objective of all our struggles and striving is change in leadership. Our final destination or goal in this world is that leadership that is currently in the hands of criminals and transgressors should come to an end and be transferred or given in the hands of the good and virtuous people. We consider this struggle to be a means of obtaining Allah's pleasure both in this world and the Hereafter. We regret that both Muslims and non-Muslims are completely unaware of its importance. Muslims consider it to be merely a political agenda and are completely oblivious of the importance it has in 'Deen'. Non-Muslims are unaware of the fact that leadership falling in the hands of the transgressors and criminals is the root cause of all our problems and the entire edifice of restructuring or improving our society lies in the fact that the affairs of the world must be run or should be in the hands of the pious and virtuous. This unawareness is partially due to bias and partially due to lack of knowledge. Today the climate of destruction, oppression and rebelliousness; the steep decline in morality; the poison that has spread in every vein of culture, business, economy, politics and all the powers of human invention and research are being used for destructive purposes instead of the benefit and welfare of humanity. If at all the above can be attributed to something then it is the fact that the reins of power and the leadership of the world is not in the hands of the pious and virtuous but rather in the hands of those

who are rebellious to God, are worshippers of materialism and completely absorbed in evil.

Now if anyone wants improvement and progress in this world and is desirous of replacing destruction with construction, war with peace, moral degradation with noble character and evil with good, then it is not enough to sermonize for righteousness, counsel for piety and motivate for morals. Rather it is obligatory for him to gather all the forces and resources of good and organize them into a collective force which can snatch the reins of power from the evil transgressors and effect a change in the system of leadership.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

Whosoever has even a slight understanding of human affairs will not be oblivious of the fact that the rise and fall of mankind finally depends on its leadership. Just as any vehicle moves only in the direction in which its driver leads it and its passengers being forced to travel in that direction unwittingly; similarly the direction tread by human civilization will be that as determined by those who lead and marshal it. Obviously, those having control over the entire world resources, those having power and the reins of governance, those controlling the fulcrum of human life, those having the means to mould the minds and ideals of human society, those who can shape human character and morals, those who can establish and direct the collective system that deals with public life and those who can influence human values shall always guide and command mankind and humanity can never escape to tread on the path towards which they are steered and led. If these people who lead and command are pious and virtuous then automatically human affairs will be run on the lines of piety, righteousness and virtue and even the evil people will be forced to become good. Righteousness will spread and if even evil is not removed completely at least it will not flourish and spread.

But if leadership and power is in the hands of those who are rebellious to God and steeped in disobedience and transgression then automatically the system will deteriorate. It will be based on rebellion to God, oppression and moral degeneration. Thoughts, philosophies, knowledge and traditions, business and politics, culture, civilization and society, morals and mutual dealings, laws and justice will decline completely. Evil and corruption will rise, goodness and virtue will diminish and the world will be filled with tumult and oppression. In such a system it will be easy to do evil and very difficult to do and remain good.

You might have observed that when a huge crowd moves in a particular direction then a person within it does not have to exert any efforts in moving in that direction and moves along with the help of the force that the crowd develops. But if someone wants to move in the opposite direction in which the crowd is moving then in spite of exerting full efforts he will only be able to move a few odd feet. Then the crowd can sweep him off that movement (that he was able to traverse against the crowd) in one push. In the same way when the system that governs public life falls in the hands of evil people and moves in the direction of rejecting God and transgression, then it becomes very easy for people and groups to move in the wrong direction. They do not have to exert any force to do so. If however they want to move in the opposite direction (of goodness and virtue) then even if they exert their entire efforts, they would be able to move just a little in that direction and the wave of the system (of evil doers) will push them miles away in spite of them trying to resist it.

What I am saying is no longer something theoretical which requires proof and evidence. But contemporary events have made it a living reality which cannot be denied by any observer. You can yourselves see how in your country in a single century the thoughts and philosophies changed, the temperament and disposition changed, the way of thinking changed, the standard of culture and morality changed and the way of conducting ones affairs and dealings all changed. What

is the real reason for this transformation that occurred in your own country? Can you give any other reason besides the fact that those who had leadership and power changed the morals, the dealings and affairs and the whole civilization according to their own whims and fancies?

Then please reflect and try to examine closely. Did the forces that oppose this change or transformation achieve success or meet with failure? Is it not a fact that children of the people who led the opposition to this change are in fact being swept away by the deluge of this change? And now that change has even entered their very homes. Is it not a fact that people from the families of the religious leaders are publicly coming out doubting of the existence of God, Divine Revelation and Prophethood?

In spite of seeing and experiencing so much, can anyone refuse to accept that the most fundamental and crucial issue about all the problems that humanity is facing is that of leadership and who controls the reins of power. And this fact is not something contemporary but has been so since a long time. "People follow the Deen of their king" is a very old proverb. Thus even in the Hadith the rulers and the scholars have been held responsible for the rise and fall of nations. That is because leadership and the reins of power are in their hands.

THE REAL OBJECTIVE OF DEEN- TO ESTABLISH PIOUS LEADERSHIP

After stating the above we can easily understand how important it is in our Deen to establish pious leadership. Obviously the Deen of Allah wants people to become obedient to God and stop obeying any other entity besides God. Then the 'Deen' wants only the commandments of Allah to prevail and become the law of the land. Then it demands the end of corruption, mischief and evil that can invite the ire of Allah and encourages virtuousness and good deeds that please Allah.

These objectives of establishing pious leadership cannot be achieved as long as the role of guiding and leading mankind

is in the hands of the rejecters of the Truth and the misguided. But unfortunately the followers of Truth remain subservient to these rebels of Allah and remain content to utilize their concessions and allowances in practising Islam. These objectives actually demand that all the pious and virtuous people who are desirous of the pleasure of Allah should develop collective strength and strive with their utmost to try and gain the position of leadership, guidance and commandership. Without these efforts the real objective of Deen cannot be achieved.

That is why establishing pious leadership and the system of Truth has been declared as the real objective of Deen. And after being oblivious of this responsibility no deed can qualify man to seek the pleasure of Allah. Please ponder on why in the Quran and Hadith so much importance has been given to (being with) 'Jamaat' and to hear and obey its commands. And this command is so strict that if anybody leaves the Jamaat then he invites capital punishment even if he professes the 'Kalima' and practises prayer and fasting. Surely the sole and exclusive reason for this (harsh punishment) is that the real objective of Deen is to establish pious leadership and preserve its position and this objective can be realized only by collective strength. Hence whosoever weakens collective strength commits such a big crime that it can never be compensated by prayer or the affirmation of Tawheed (unity of God). Then just think why has Jihad been given such importance in Deen that if we shirk our responsibility towards it then Quran declares it to be 'Nifaq' (hypocrisy)? Jihad is just another name for trying to establish the system of Truth and Quran declares it to be the criterion on which faith will be judged. In other words whoever has faith cannot accept the dominance of the system of falsehood and also will not avoid the sacrifice of his self and his wealth in the struggle to establish system of Truth.

I will not be able to go into the full details of this issue, but whatever I have said is sufficient to clarify that in Islam establishing pious leadership has pivotal and primary importance. And whoever brings faith in Islam cannot say that

his responsibility ends with trying to follow Islam in all the various aspects of his life as far as possible, rather it is the demand of that very faith that he focuses all his efforts and energy towards that single mission that the leadership that is in the hands of who deny God and the transgressors be taken up by the pious people. This pious leadership will then establish a system of Truth and justice which will correct and rectify the affairs of the world and then nurture and preserve it. Then as this objective or mission cannot be met without huge collective efforts hence it is imperative to form a virtuous Jamaat which follows the Truth and practises pristine principles and has no other goal besides establishing, preserving and continuing the system of Truth. If there were to be just a single 'Momin' in this world then also it would not be correct of him to find himself alone and lacking resources to accept the system of falsehood; or to take the 'Shariah-ee' (by legality) excuse of accepting the lesser evil and then reconciling oneself with the dominance of those who deny God and are transgressors and leading a miserable and compromising life. Actually the only simple and straight forward way for following Islam is to invite people to the way that pleases God. Then if people do not heed his call he should persist and persevere by continuing to stand on the path of Truth and if he does this till he perishes then it would be far better than singing the tunes that please this world and tread the path which is led by the transgressors. And if some people are ready to listen to what he has to say then it is obligatory upon him to collect such people and make a group or an organization. Then that group should exert its collective strength towards the goal which I have described.

Gentlemen! I have understood the aforesaid to be the real obligation of our Deen with the little knowledge of Deen that Allah has blessed me with and the insight I have obtained through the study of the Quran and Sunnah. This according to me is the real demand of the Book of Allah and the way of the Prophets and I cannot deviate from this opinion till as time someone proves to me the contrary through the Quran and Sunnah (that this is not the real objective of Deen)

THE SUNNAH OF ALLAH REGARDING LEADERSHIP

After having understood the objective of our efforts we should try and understand the Sunnah of Allah through which we can realize and achieve our objective. Allah is running this universe under one single law and all the things are regulated according to one rule. In this world no effort can succeed merely by pious wishes and noble intentions and neither can the blessings of pious personalities make those efforts fruitful. But those efforts (to establish Deen) have to conform to those conditions which have been stipulated by the Divine law. If you want to farm (a piece of land) then no matter how pious you are and no matter how much you remember God, the seeds that you plant cannot germinate and flower till you follow the rules and laws that God has made for successful farming.

In the same way the change in leadership that you desire can never be accomplished merely with good wishes and prayers. You must understand the rules and fulfil their conditions that are required through which leadership can be established in this world and through which power is obtained and through which power is snatched away. Although I have been pointing towards this through my speeches and writings, I would like to present it in more details without which our course of action will not be clear.

If we study the personality of a human being then we come to know that there are different characteristics or positions within him that are both different and yet somewhat similar. One characteristic is that he possesses his own physical and bodily existence which runs on the same laws as animals and material entities. The success and failure of this characteristic depends on the instruments and resources, worldly means and their physical conditions just as all other things that are found in the universe. Whatever this human being can do shall be subject to the appliances and resources that he is able to utilize and he can perform only in his innate human capacity and can be influenced by all kinds of powers whether good or bad.

The second visible characteristic or dimension of a human being is that he possesses a moral personality. This moral personality is not bound or subject to the physical or material laws but in fact has an upper hand over them or rules them. This utilizes the animal and physical dimension of the human personality as an instrument as well as tries to mould the external things of this universe according to his interest and utility. The moral qualities that Allah has bestowed on man are his capability for service and powers of inspiration which are governed by moral and not physical laws.

ETHICS DECIDE THE RISE AND FALL OF MANKIND

Both dimensions work simultaneously in human beings. Altogether his success and failure, his rise and fall depend on both the moral and material powers. He cannot neglect moral powers as well as the physical and material powers. He gains strength through both and loses strength when his grip on both powers is weakened or when he is inferior in them compared to others. But if you reflect on it deeply you will realize that it is moral strength that holds real importance in human life and not the material powers. It cannot be denied that obtaining material resources, using physical means and being level with the external world is a necessary condition for success and as long as man is living in this physical world this condition can never be overlooked. But the real thing which elevates and degrades man and which exercises the most influence in the rise and fall of his destiny are moral powers.

Obviously one qualifies to be a human not on the basis of his physical body but because of his moral existence. Man is considered to be different than other animals not because he occupies space or he breathes or that he procreates. But the quality which separates him from all other creation and in fact makes him the 'Khalifa' (vicegerent) of God on this earth is his ability to make a moral choice and being morally responsible. If the essence of humanity is character and morality then it has to be accepted that morality acquires a pivotal and decisive role

in human life and that moral laws govern the rise and fall of humanity.

After understanding this reality when we study ethics then we can observe that it is divided into 2 major parts:

Fundamental Ethics

Islamic Ethics

FUNDAMENTAL ETHICS

By fundamental ethics we mean those qualities which are the foundation of human character and these include all those qualities which are required for man to succeed in this world irrespective of the correctness of his objective. These morals can be devoid or bereft of the belief in God, Revelation, Prophethood and the Hereafter. These morals can still be present in a person even though he may not have a pious personality, may not perform virtuous and righteous deeds and he may or may not be working for a good objective. Also he may possess these fundamental ethics irrespective of the presence or absence of faith and the right objective. As long as a person or a group has these qualities that are required to succeed in this world then he will definitely succeed and can beat anybody who is weaker than him in these qualities.

Whether he is a believer or unbeliever, is pious or impious, improves things or is destructive: he can only be effective if he has firm determination, can make difficult decisions, has resoluteness and firmness of purpose, patience and persistence, constancy and consistency, endurance and tolerance, bravery and courage, is vigilant and painstaking and ready to face hardships, is dedicated to his goal and objective and has the capacity to sacrifice everything for that, is quick and yet cautious, has good insight and understanding and is a visionary, knows how to work with discipline, realizes his obligations and responsibilities, has the ability to understand and adapt to the changing conditions, has control over his emotions, desires and can regulate his excitement, can influence others, inspire people and take work out of them.

Then it is also necessary that he has some of those noble qualities which are the essence of humanity and because of which man gains prestige and acceptance in this world. For example some of them are self-respect, benevolence, mercy, care, justice, magnanimity, truth, trust, honesty, honouring promises, humanity, balance, nobleness and decency, purity and control over heart and mind.

If these qualities are present in the majority of any nation or class then be assured that it has that essence of humanity through which a powerful group or entity can be created. But this group cannot become a strong and powerful collective force till the other moral qualities are joined with it. For example some or all of them unite under one collective goal and then dedicate themselves to this goal or mission by sacrificing one's personal needs, life, wealth and children. They must have mutual love and care for each other and also know how to work together unitedly. They must be ready to sacrifice their ego and sense of self at least to the level, which are required for disciplined and organized efforts, they are able to discern the bad leadership from the good and make only good people their leaders. Their leaders must be selfless and dedicated and must know how to do the job correctly and possess all other requisite qualities of leadership. Also the nation or community must know and understand that they have to follow, obey and repose confidence in their leadership be ready to offer all their intellectual, physical and material capabilities to them. Then the whole nation must be so alert and sensitive that they do not allow any such thing to breed within themselves that can be harmful to the public welfare of their nation.

These are the qualities which I term as 'Fundamental Ethics'. Because in reality these qualities are the means to acquire moral strength and one cannot succeed in any human endeavour till one has these qualities. The example of these moral qualities is like the iron which has some inherent characteristics within it and can be shaped and molded into a powerful weapon. It can be used for both good and evil

purpose. Even if you want to use the weapon for a good purpose it will be beneficial to you only if it is made of iron and not soft wood which would not be able to handle even ordinary damage. This is exactly what the Prophet (pbuh) has said in the Hadith "Those of you who were good in the times of Jahiliya (ignorance) are also good in (after accepting) Islam". Thus the talented people of the times of ignorance proved to be most useful after they accepted Islam. The only difference was that before their energies and talents were spent in the wrong way and Islam put them on the right track. And the incompetent ones were neither useful in the times of ignorance nor after accepting Islam. The tremendous success that Prophet (pbuh) enjoyed, the influence of which could be felt in a few years from the rivers of Sindh till the shores of the Atlantic in a large portion of the globe was because of the extremely talented people that the Prophet (pbuh) got (as he spread Islam) in the Arabian Peninsula. They had tremendous power of high moral character. God forbid if the Prophet (pbuh) would have got a crowd of petty, cowardly, weak, unreliable people who lacked determination; then would the same results have accrued?

ISLAMIC ETHICS

Now let us look at the other dimension of ethics which I call as 'Islamic Ethics'. These are no different than fundamental ethics but merely its correct and perfect version.

The first role of Islam is that it provides a pivot or axis to fundamental ethics and they are purified to perfection after becoming associated or joined with Islam. In the beginning these morals are a power which can be both good and bad. Just as a sword which can be a source of evil in the hands of a thief and a source of good in the hands of a 'Mujahid' (one who strives his utmost for Islam). In the same way the power of ethics or sound morals is not good by itself merely by being in the hands of a particular person or a group but becomes good only when that moral strength is used for the right purpose.

Islam accomplishes the task of putting fundamental ethics on the right track. The demand of Tawheed (Unity of God) in Islam is that the entire efforts, hard work, and striving should be for only one purpose and that is the pleasure of God.

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ (الانعام)

Say, "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.

(Al-Anam 6:162)

The entire boundaries of thoughts and deeds become confined to the limits as defined by God.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ (الفاتحہ)

It is You we worship and You we ask for help. (Al-Fatiha1:5)

The result of this reformation or rectification is that all the fundamental ethics or moral qualities that I have described to you are channelled in the right direction. And the power that is obtained through them instead of being used for the sake of his own self, family, community or the progress of his nation through whatsoever means can then be utilized for the supremacy of the Truth and that also through legitimate ways and means. This elevates it from the status of an isolated power to a means of global good and mercy.

The other thing that Islam accomplishes regarding morality is that it strengthens and reinforces the fundamental ethics and expands the horizons and boundaries of its implementation. Take the example of patience. Even the most patient of persons who exercises patience for the sake of worldly goals and which has been nurtured by polytheism and materialism can exercise restraint and determination only to a certain limit after which he becomes disturbed and perturbed. But the patience that is nurtured by Tawheed and is not for worldly pursuits but for the Lord of the whole world then that forbearance, tolerance and firm determination is enough to take on all the problems of this world. Then the patience of unbelievers is very limited. That limitation can be seen when it

stood with great bravery and courage to face bullets and bombs but just a little later when there was small temptation then it could not resist succumbing to lusts. But Islam spreads patience in the entire human life and does not prepare him only to face some special dangers, problems and calamities but prepares him to face every temptation, fear, apprehension and creates such a powerful force to resist all lusts and desires that want man to divert from the path of the Truth.

Actually Islam converts the entire life of a believer into a life of patience. The fundamental principle of which is to remain steadfast with the correct thoughts and deeds in spite of all kinds of dangers, losses and problems and persist on this path of patience even if there is no visible outcome that is useful and beneficial. And it does not adopt bad thoughts and deeds even though it might fetch benefits and hopes for success. In the hope of gaining success in the Hereafter to desist from sins and persist on the path of the Truth is Islamic patience. And this appears in those forms also which can be seen in the life of the unbelievers in a very small and limited way. You can analyse the other fundamental ethics of unbelievers also. They are limited and weak because they lack correct moral foundations. Islam provides them the correct foundation, strengthens and elevates them.

The third important task that Islam accomplishes is that it creates a beautiful and tall building on the foundations of fundamental ethics through which man can reach the glorious heights of his self and enhance his personality. It cleanses him of selfishness, ego, oppression, vulgarity, filth and waywardness. It creates piety, virtuousness and the love for the Truth. It creates the awareness of moral responsibility and develops in him the habit to control his sensory desires. It makes him benevolent to other creatures, open minded, merciful, ever ready to share grief and sorrow, honest, selfless, well-wisher, doer of justice without prejudice and always treading the path of the Truth under all conditions. And then Islam creates such a powerful character within him that one

can always hope and expect good out of him and never anything bad or evil.

Then Islam does not stop at making a person pious but makes him according to what the Prophet (pbuh) said namely "the one who opens the door to good and the one who closes the door of evil". That is Islam hands him the mission of spreading good and stopping evil. These morals and such character has such intrinsic beauty, attraction and power to captivate that if some disciplined Jamaat adopts it and also works on the mission that Islam has given it then no force of this world would be able to defeat it.

CLARIFICATION REGARDING "SUNNAH OF ALLAH and THE PATH TO LEADERSHIP"

Now I shall describe in a few words the Sunnah (way) of Allah regarding leadership which has prevailed from the beginning and will remain in place till as time man exists in his current form and which is:

In the absence of any group possessing both Islamic ethics and fundamental ethics, the leadership of this world would then be awarded (by God) to the group which at least has fundamental ethics and is superior to the other group (that is devoid of both fundamental and Islamic ethics) in terms of material means and resources. That is because Allah wants to run the affairs of this world and this position is awarded to the group that is (materially) more capable amongst all other groups.

But if there is an organized group that is superior in Islamic ethics and fundamental ethics to all other groups of this world and it also utilizes correctly the material means and resources, then that group has to get world leadership and it is not possible for any other group to acquire world leadership. This would be against nature and would be against the Sunnah of Allah which He has decided regarding human beings. It would be against the promises that Allah has made in His Book to the believers. And Allah does not love oppression and

corruption that He would award the position of leadership to those who spread corruption in spite of having a group that would run the affairs of this world according to His commands.

But please note that this is possible only if there exist a virtuous Jamaat with these qualities previously described. If a pious and virtuous person or some pious and virtuous people are present but are not united (into a collective unit or Jamaat) but spread out here and there then the system of "the Khilafat (vicegerency) of this world" cannot be changed even though those people may be 'Waliullah' (saints) or even Prophets. Whatever promises Allah has made about "Khilafat of this world" have been made not to divided and unorganized people but those promises have been made to a Jamaat that proves it to be an excellent 'Ummah' (community) in practice.

Also please remember that the prevalent system will not change overnight as soon as such a Jamaat is formed in the sense that once such a Jamaat is established then immediately the angels shall descend from the sky and remove the corrupt and the criminals from the seat of power. On the contrary that Jamaat would have to fight the powers of unbelief and corruption at every step and at every front. And it would have to prove its love for the Truth and its capability by offering all kinds of sacrifices in the path of the Truth. This is such a mandatory condition that even the Prophets were not exempted of it so it would be futile for anyone to hope that this condition would not apply today.

COMPARING THE POWER OF FUNDAMENTAL ETHICS AND ISLAMIC ETHICS

The Sunnah of Allah that I have understood about the comparison between material and moral power through the extensive study of Quran and human history is that wherever moral power is completely dependent on fundamental ethics, in that case material resources are of prime importance. However there is always a possibility that if one group has excessive material power then it can subjugate the world even with a

small amount of moral power. And the other groups although are superior in terms of moral power, they have to remain subjugated because of the lack of material resources. But wherever moral power is joined by both fundamental and Islamic ethics then in spite of a lack of material resources finally moral power is able to defeat all those powers that are backed by only fundamental ethics and material resources.

We can understand this ratio as follows: if fundamental ethics require hundred percent material resources then the combination of fundamental and Islamic ethics requires only 25 percent material resources; balance 75 percent is compensated by the presence of Islamic resources. In fact the experience of the times of Prophet (pbuh) demonstrates that if the moral power is of the calibre of the Prophet (pbuh) and the Noble Companions then even 10 percent of material resources are sufficient. This is the reality towards which it has been pointed out in the ayat of the Quran 8:65

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى ٱلْقِتَالِ ۚ إِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَٰبِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا۟
مِاْئَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّاْئَةٌ يَغْلِبُوٓا۟ أَلْفًا مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

(الانفال)

O Prophet, urge the believers to battle. If there are among you twenty [who are] steadfast, they will overcome two hundred. And if there are among you one hundred [who are] steadfast, they will overcome a thousand of those who have disbelieved because they are a people who do not understand. (Al-Anfal:65)

This is the last thing that I have said and please do not misunderstand it to be something of blind faith and assume that I am describing to you some kind of miracle or marvel. No! This is something natural that occurs through the law of cause and effect and can take place in any age or era if the reasons and conditions warrant it. I think it would be appropriate for me to clarify in a few words how Islamic ethics (which already includes the fundamental ethics) can compensate the lack of 75 percent or even 90 percent of material resources.

To understand this, just reflect on the current situation (*speech was delivered in April 1945) in your country and the countries around you. You have the World War II which started five and a half years back and which ended with the defeat of Germany and that of Japan also appears near. As far as fundamental ethics is concerned both the power blocs (Fascist and Axis) are equally placed. In fact in some instances Germany and Japan has displayed far more superior moral qualities. In the field of science and technology too both blocs are equal. In fact it cannot be denied that Germany is superior to others in this respect. However there is only one aspect in which one bloc is far ahead than the other and that is the material resources. It has much more people than both Germany and Japan. Its geographic situation is superior and certain historical reasons have added a lot of favourable conditions to their benefit. That is why it was victorious. Hence it does not appear that a country that has less population and limited material resources will be able to confront and challenge other countries with greater material resources and population in spite of having superior fundamental ethics and science and technology. Because the power that arises on the basis of fundamental ethics and material resources will necessarily have two things: either it will be nationalistic and will like to subjugate other nations or will rise up by propagating certain universal principles and invite other nations towards them.

In the first scenario it has no other way to succeed but to prove superior over others in terms of material means and resources, as all the nations that it is trying to subjugate will confront it with great anger and hatred and will try its utmost to stop it and put hurdles in its way. As far as the second scenario is concerned it is definitely possible that it will be able to win the hearts and minds of other nations and will require very little power to remove the hurdles in its way. But one must remember that hearts cannot be won simply on the basis of some pleasant principles but they can be won only by being genuine well-wishers, by noble intentions, honesty,

selflessness, benevolence, being charitable, sharing grief and by being upright and just. These qualities are required in war and peace, victory and defeat, friendship and enmity and all other adverse conditions. These qualities belong to those morals which are far superior to the fundamental ethics.

This is the only reason why all the struggle and efforts of the powers that come up on the basis of fundamental ethics and material resources (whether those powers are openly nationalistic or have a hidden agenda of nationalism faked by invitation to certain universal principles) in the end have to settle for the selfish motive of enacting the superiority of some race or class or propagating the cult of some personality. You can see that today in the political relations that America, Britain and Russia have with other nations. It is something very normal in such a struggle (for global dominance) that every nation confronts each other very strongly and expends all moral and material energies against each other. And these nations are not willing to exercise any flexibility when it comes to national borders till as time the other power wages war and crushes it.

Now just reflect; in such a climate if a group (although initially it arises from a single nation but not as a community but as a Jamaat) exists which is pure from imposing the cult of the personality, superiority of one's race or class but envisions the welfare of humanity in following noble principles and wants to propagate and establish the Islamic way of life. The ideals it aspires for, envisage a society that has no discrimination on the basis of community, class, ethnicity and all citizens in it have equal rights and status and can compete for positions of leadership and guidance so long as they are foremost in practicing these noble principles. It is even possible that a recent convert to those principles may become the leader and lead the other older followers. When this group rises with its Dawat (invitation to a certain ideology) then the people who do not want it to succeed try to put obstacles in its path and then both of them confront and struggle against each other. But as the intensity of this struggle increases the pious

group displays even better and superior morals and character. It proves by its behaviour that its sole motive is the welfare of humanity. Their enmity is not against any personality or race but against their ignorance and depravity, that they can love and embrace and discard their enmity once they leave that ignorance and depravity. They are not attracted by their wealth, business and industry but want their moral and spiritual upliftment. They do not indulge in lies, deceit and fraud even in the most trying of tribulations and act with nobility and with decency in the face of conspiracy and treachery. They do not indulge in tumult and oppression in a fit of revenge. They do not leave their principles even in hard and grave war conditions. They remain steadfast on Truth, live up to their pledges and promises and deal in a noble way even under adverse conditions. They are just and practise honesty and trustfulness to a degree that fulfils the standard that they preached and propagated to the world.

Then when this pious, holy, devout, righteous, generous and merciful group of 'Mujahids' encounters the philandering and ruthless group of the enemy then the individual character of each one of their group becomes conspicuous and noticeable as compared to the animalistic and merciless behaviour of the enemy. When the enemy arrive as prisoners subjugated by the pious group then they see piety, nobleness and a holy atmosphere (within the people of the pious group) and it starts to have an effect on their unclean souls. When they arrive as prisoners the good character of the other group gets highlighted in the climate of darkness and evil. When they conquer some land then instead of seeking revenge on its populace they offer forgiveness, they seek justice and are merciful instead of oppressing people, they care and not hate, they are gentle and not proud and haughty, they offer prayer instead of profanity and people experience the message of the Truth instead of false propaganda. This surprises and astonishes people that the victorious army is neither demanding women neither are they seeking loot and booty. Neither do they search for their business secrets neither are they anxious to crush them

economically and neither do they want to insult their national pride and self-respect. They only worry that in the nation that they inherited; everybody must have safety and security in terms of their dignity, wealth, rights and there must not be any moral depravity and any kind of public tumult and oppression.

In contrast when the enemy group conquers any land then the entire populace seeks refuge from their merciless oppression. Please reflect and ponder on the difference between these battles and the wars that were fought for the sake of national supremacy. Obviously in such encounters in spite of the lack of material resources, piety and good character shall be able to defeat the forces of evil and merciless oppression. The weapons of good character will prove to be more lethal than the material arms and ammunition. Foes will become friends even as war rages on, hearts will be won before bodies, populations will be defeated without firing a bullet and when a pious group will commence work with a handful of people and meagre resources then slowly it will start getting generals, soldiers, skilled staff, food and ration and war equipment from the enemy camp.

Whatever I am saying is not day-dreaming or some assumptions and hypothetical things but if you look at the era of the Prophet (pbuh) and the Righteous Caliphs then you will realize that these are actually historical events and not fiction and this can be repeated only if someone has the courage to try it.

Gentlemen! I hope that this speech will make you realize that the real foundation of power is moral power and if there exists an organized group in this world that possesses both fundamental and Islamic ethics and makes use of material resources too then it is highly improbable logically and impossible by the law of nature that someone else remains on the seat of power and authority of this world.

At the same time I am hopeful that you have understood well the root cause of the poor conditions in which Muslims find themselves today. Obviously the peoples who do not make

use of material resources, do not possess fundamental ethics, neither do they have Islamic ethics in their collective affairs: they cannot occupy the position of power and leadership. And the demand of the absolute and impartial Sunnah of God is that the unbelievers should be given precedence over them who are superior to them in terms of fundamental ethics and the use of material resources, although they do not have Islamic ethics they still are proving themselves to be better at running the affairs of this world.

If you have some grievance in this matter then it should be against your own selves and not against the Sunnah of Allah and the result of this complaint should be that you start trying to remove the flaws and mistakes from your lives which has made you a follower instead of a leader and has made you move backwards instead of forward.

After this it is important that I narrate to you the foundations of Islamic ethics and morals clearly and precisely because I know that generally there is a lot of confusion amongst Muslims about it. And because of this confusion very few know what really is Islamic morality or ethics and what must be nurtured in what grade and sequence in order to train man and lift him to his zenith and pinnacle.

THE FOUR SATGES OF ISLAMIC ETHICS

What we call as Islamic ethics; has 4 stages according to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Iman

Islam

Taqwa

Ehsaan

These stages come after each other in a natural sequence in that each stage is born of the earlier and is based on the earlier stage and as long as the earlier stage is not strengthened and becomes strong and sturdy building the next stage cannot be even imagined.

In this entire process of building and creating 'Iman' plays the role of the foundation. The building of Islam is based on its foundations and then on top of it are the floors of Taqwa and Ehsan. If there is no Iman then there is no possibility of having Islam, Taqwa and Ehsaan. If Iman is weak then it cannot be burdened by the weight of upper floors and if at all such a building is ever constructed then it will be weak and unstable. If Iman is limited and confined then Islam, Taqwa and Ehsaan will also be restricted by those limits. Thus till as time Iman is correct, strong and wide no sane person who has an understanding of religion will think of building on Islam, Taqwa and Ehsaan.

Similarly Islam must be corrected, strengthened and widened before Taqwa and the same done to Ehsaan before Taqwa. But we often see that people disregard this natural and principled sequence and start talking about Taqwa and Ehsaan without building on Iman and Islam. And even more disappointing is the fact that people have an extremely limited idea or understanding about Iman and Islam.

That is why they think that if ones traditions, attire and some visible things related to lifestyle are patterned according to some specific format or mode then Taqwa can be accomplished. And then by performing 'Nawafil' (supplementary prayer), doing 'Zikr' (remembrance of God), 'Vird and Vazifey' (repeated recitation of certain sacred text) and other such similar acts will enable one to scale the lofty heights of Ehsaan. Although (quite startlingly) sometimes you come across some very visibly apparent (disturbing) signs and symptoms in people practicing such Taqwa and Ehsaan that lead you to conclude that their Iman itself is not yet correct and strong.

As long as these mistakes exist we cannot dream of succeeding in completing the syllabus of Islamic ethics. Hence it is necessary that we have a good understanding of all these 4 stages: Iman, Islam, Taqwa and Ehsaan along with its sequence and arrangement.

IMAN

Let us take Iman first. It is the foundation of an Islamic life. Everyone knows that the affirmation of Tawheed (Unity of God) and Risalat (Prophethood) is called Iman. If someone affirms this then he becomes eligible to enter into the fold of Islam legally and becomes qualified to be treated as a Muslim. But is this simple affirmation which is sufficient to fulfil a legal requirement strong enough to hold the foundations of the three storey building of Islam? Most people think so and hence the moment there is the affirmation of faith people start the work of Islam, Taqwa and Ehsaan and which proves to be more fickle than building castles in the air. However for building the complete structure of Islamic life it is required that Iman is expansive enough with all its details and deep enough to be firm and strong. Whatever portion of this structure will be left out shall be found missing in the Islamic life and wherever there are flaws in the depth of its foundations there the structure of Islamic life will prove weak and unstable.

For example take 'Iman Billah' (the belief in God) which is the foundation of religion. You will see that after the acceptance of God changes from the simple (verbal) reaffirmation and Iman is extended to include its various details and manifestations then different scenarios and situations develop. Sometimes it ends on this premise that indeed God is Omnipresent and He is the Creator of this Universe and is therefore the One and the Only One. Sometimes its final limit is that God is the One Who should be worshipped. Sometimes the qualities, rights and controls of Allah are accepted in a more wider sense and do go far enough to acknowledge that Allah is the Knower of the Unseen, He listens to and sees all things, answers our prayers, is the Provider of needs and He is the Sole One who should be worshipped and that in religious matters the final say should be the Book of God.

It is obvious that we cannot have a similar way of life with so much disparity in thoughts. In fact smaller and more restricted the idea and vision about Iman that much small and

restricted will be the role of Islam in morals and one's practical lives. And as a matter of fact where 'Iman Billah' reaches its widest vision in the eyes of a normal religious person there too the Islamic way of life will not go beyond the acceptance and tolerance of both the rebels and servants of Allah or that the system of unbelief and the Islamic system are mixed together.

Thus the depth of 'Iman Billah' too can be measured differently. Somebody may not be ready to sacrifice the most ordinary of his things in the way of Allah in spite of acknowledging Allah as his Master and Provider. Some people give precedence to Allah over some things but also give priority to certain other things over Allah. Someone may sacrifice his life and wealth in the way of Allah but is not ready to sacrifice fame, his personal inclination and his thoughts and ideas.

In the same way the strength and weakness of the Islamic system is decided and the Islamic character is prone to cause deception if the foundation of Iman under it is weak and unstable. If at all a complete building of Islamic life can be erected then it can only be done on the foundations of the Tawheed which covers both the personal and public life, on the basis of which man considers himself and all his possessions to belong to Allah and considers that there is only One legitimate Owner, One Deity who is worthy of worship and is our Sole Sovereign. One who can issue ordinances and is most Merciful. Only He should be considered the fountain head of knowledge and man should gratefully accept this reality that escaping the obedience of God and ignoring His guidance or joining partners in his Being, His attributes, His rights and privileges in whatever form is ignorance and misguidance. Then this building can be strengthened only if man decides with full consciousness and determination that he and all his possessions belong to Allah. Man must end his own personal criteria for good and bad and adopt the criteria as defined by Allah. He should suppress his own will and desires and blend and merge with the ideas, theories, feelings and way of thinking according to the Book of God. He must forgo all his

loyalties which are not according to Allah or are being shared with someone other than God. The greatest love in one's heart should be for Allah and dismiss every idol from within which demands love and allegiance other than Allah. Ones love and hatred, friendship and enmity, like and dislike, war and peace should be merged so much with the Will of God that man's inner self demands the same thing which is according to the Will of God and runs away from the things that Allah dislikes. This is the real status of Iman Billah and you yourselves will realize that wherever Iman itself is weak in its expanse, depth and strength; then there is no possibility of Taqwa and Ehsaan. Can this weakness be compensated by the length of your beards, the attire you wear, by rotating the beads of the rosary and offering the night prayer (Tahajjud)?

Just think along the same lines about the other things that make up faith (Iman). The faith on Prophethood is not complete till one does not accept the Prophet (pbuh) as his guide in all the affairs of his life and rejects all such guidance that comes from sources other than the Prophet (pbuh). The faith in the Holy Quran remains incomplete till as time one accepts other sources of guidance regarding how to lead one's life or has the slightest hesitation in "MA ANZALAL LAH" (following the laws revealed by Allah).

In the same way faith in the Hereafter cannot be fulfilled till ones inner self does not give priority and precedence to Akhirah (the Hereafter) over Dunya (this temporal world) and is ready to reject the Dunya for the sake of Akhirah and he is always reminded and aware of the accountability of the Hereafter.

Where these foundations themselves are not present can a magnificent building of Islamic way of life be created? When people thought that it is possible to create Islamic morals without the correct expanse, depth and strength of these foundations then we had a situation where judges were pronouncing verdicts against the Book of God, lawyers were pleading and advocating on the basis of non-Sharia laws. People who protect and remain under the system of Kufr, the

leaders and their followers who base their culture and politics on the system of Kufr all of them could now reach the higher stages of Taqwa and Ehsaan as long as they could make some superficial changes in their lives and offer some supplementary prayers and do some 'Zikr' of God.

ISLAM

When the foundations of Iman that I have just discussed reach their completion and become deep and well entrenched then the building of Islam can be erected on it. Islam is actually another name for the visible manifestation of Iman. The relationship between Iman and Islam is that between the seed and the tree. Whatever is inside the seed is manifested in the form of the tree. In fact by looking at the tree one can make out what was present and what was missing in the seed. You cannot imagine a tree without the seed and also it is not possible that a seed planted in a fertile land does not yield a tree. The same applies to Iman and Islam. Wherever you have Iman, you will see its demonstration in the practical life, in the morals, in the making and breaking of relations, in the direction of hard work, in the foundations of methodology and attitude, in the path of struggle and striving, in the use of time, powers and capabilities and all visible activities of man.

Believe me in whatever aspect of life it may be, if un-Islamic things manifest themselves instead of Islam, then (for a surety) Iman is absent in it (that aspect of life) and if it all it is present then it is very weak and lifeless and if ones entire life is practiced almost similar to that of non-Muslims then please be informed that the heart is devoid of Iman or that the land is so barren and dry that the seed of Iman is unable to produce fruits and leaves. Anyways, till whatever extent I have understood the Quran and the Sunnah (I can say very confidently that) it is impossible to have Iman in your heart and yet have no Islam in your actions and deeds.

On this occasion (as the speech was being delivered) a person got up and asked (Maulana Maududi) "Do you consider

Iman and Islam as one thing or there is some difference between the two?" To this query the reply was:

For a moment just ignore the arguments that jurists and experts of doctrine have made in this regard and try to understand this issue through the Quran. From the study of the Quran you will realize that the Iman that deals with one's faith or creed is linked and related to the Islam of actions and deeds. Allah describes numerous times (in the Quran) Iman with Amal e Swaleh (faith and righteous deeds) and all the promises that Allah has made relate to the people who are 'Momin' with regards to their faith and 'Muslim' with regards to their deeds. Then you will see that wherever Allah has implicated the Munafiqeen (Hypocrites) He has described the faults in their deeds as a proof of their defective Iman and has described the Islam of good deeds and righteous practice as real Iman.

Undoubtedly the question of declaring someone to be Kafir legally and then boycotting him from the Ummah (community) is something that is totally different and one must exercise utmost caution in that regard. But I am not describing that Iman and Islam here on which the legal jurisprudence can be applied. Rather I am describing that Iman and Islam here which is going to be accepted in the court of God and which will have consequences in the Hereafter. If you leave aside legal perspective and look at it very plainly then you will definitely see that wherever there is a lack of submission to Allah in practice, where the personal likes and ones desires are different from the Will of God, where there is a compromise between loyalty to God and loyalty to others, where people are busy in other things and not in Iqamat e Deen (establishing the religion of Truth); there definitely there is some defect in Iman and it is obvious that Taqwa and Ehsaan cannot be constructed over such defective Iman even though one looks and appears pious and tries to imitate the deeds of the Mohsineen (the people of Ehsaan).

If such deceptive faces are devoid of the spirit of reality then their example is that of a dead body of an extremely beautiful person but does not have any life. If you are deceived

by the corpse of this beautiful person and start building hopes around it then the real world will prove it to be useless upon the first examination and you will realize through experience that a ugly person but who is alive is more useful than a beautiful but dead person. You can deceive your inner selves by these external deceptions but cannot influence the real world and neither can you obtain any weight in the system of divine justice.

If you want the real Taqwa and Ehsaan and not the external and superficial that is required for establishing the religion of Truth in this world and reward in the Hereafter then please keep this in mind that the above two floors can never be raised till the foundations of Iman are strengthened and the proof of its strength is demonstrated in the Islam of practice and the Islam of good deeds which in other words is practical obedience and submission.

TAQWA

Before talking about Taqwa let us try to understand what it means? Taqwa does not imply following special customs and traditions nor does it imply leading a specific life style. Rather Taqwa is a condition of one's inner self that is developed by piety and a sense of responsibility and this condition is then manifested in every aspect of life. Real Taqwa is that man fears God, is aware of the fact that he is a slave of God, is conscious of his responsibility and accountability towards God and is alive to the fact that this world is an examination in which God has sent him for a limited period of time and the verdict about his future will depend on how well he utilizes his powers and capabilities in this examination, how he utilizes the resources entrusted to him by the Will of God and how he behaves with people which God has linked to his life.

If this feeling and awareness is formed in a person then his conscience is awakened, his religious sensitivity is sharpened, he is piqued by every little thing that is against the pleasure of God, becomes uneasy at everything that is against the Will of

God. He starts evaluating and assessing himself on which activities is he expending his time and resources. Not only does he avoid those openly and explicitly prohibited things but also refrains from and hesitates to do those things that are doubtful in terms of their permissibility. His sense of responsibility forces him to do all the things (expected of him by Islam) with complete obedience and submission. Because of his piety he starts trembling at every step where there is a possibility and fear of crossing the limits imposed by Allah. Discharging the rights of the Creator and the created becomes a habit and his conscience trembles in the fear of doing something against the Truth.

This state or condition is not manifested by a specific form or deed but appears in one's entire way of thinking and all aspects of life and then it leads to a resourceful life that is free of contradiction and conflict and which is pure and clean in all its aspects. In contrast where Taqwa is understood or taken as acquiring a special type of attire and physical appearance and adopting some special kind of traditions and customs and adopting such manners and etiquettes that can be measured and quantified, you will see that they will very strictly follow certain external forms and manifestations of Taqwa that have been taught to them. But in the other aspects of life the morals and behaviour exhibited are not compatible even with the initial requirements of Iman leave alone reaching the lofty pedestal of Taqwa. In the metaphor described by Prophet Eesa (pbuh) "They strain at flies and swallow camels".

To understand the difference between real Taqwa and artificial pseudo-Taqwa take the example of a person who is very conscientious about cleanliness and hygiene. He will hate dirt and filth in all its forms will adopt cleanliness and purity even if it is not exhibited openly. In contrast there is another person who is not meticulous about cleanliness and sanitation but roams around with a checklist of dirt and filth which he has copied from somewhere. This person will definitely be away from the dirt and filth that is listed in his checklist but will be found engaged in countless such horrendous things which will

be more dirty that those things which he is avoiding. This happens only because those evil things are not mentioned in the checklist that he carries.

This difference that I mentioned is not a theoretical difference but you can actually see it in the lives of these who have gained popularity as people of Taqwa. On the one hand they follow the minute things of Shariah so scrupulously that if the length of ones beard is less than a particular size then it is declared to be 'fisq' (great disobedience). If the trouser is little bit longer than the ankle then it is condemned as being punishable to Hell. To digress from the 'furui' (extra and supplementary) commands of the 'Fiqh' (jurisprudence) of their 'Maslak' (school of thought) is like abandoning religion. But on the other hand their negligence of the basic and fundamental principles if so pronounced that they have kept the entire lives of Muslims on excuses and political expediency. They have numerous justifications for escaping from the struggle of establishing Deen. All their efforts and hard work is directed at mapping an 'Islamic life' under the dominance of Kufr. And their misguidance has made Muslims content at the fact that living under a non-Muslim system or even after serving a non-Muslim system all the demands and requirements of Deen can be fulfilled by remaining under certain limited confines of religious life and there is no need to strive for anything more. Even more regrettable is the fact that if someone presents before them the real demands and requirements of Deen and draws their attention to the struggle of establishing the religion of Truth then not only do they ignore his words but offer all sorts of excuses, exemptions and tricks that might allow themselves and Muslims to escape this responsibility. Still this has no impact on their Taqwa and neither do people with religious inclination feel that their Taqwa is compromised. In the same way the difference between real and artificial Taqwa is manifested in various other forms but you can feel and realize it if you have the real understanding of Taqwa in your minds.

It does not mean that I want to reduce the importance or that I feel the etiquettes and commandments that are established by Hadith regarding decorum, attire and certain external or related to outwardly conduct of leading one's life are superfluous and unnecessary. God forbid that I entertain such thoughts in my heart. Actually I just want to ingrain upon you the fact that what is important is this real and genuine Taqwa and not these external and superficial things. Whoever will be blessed with real Taqwa will have a complete Islamic life that is useful and without conflict and contradiction. Slowly but surely Islam will manifest itself in his thoughts, feelings, inclination, temperament, life-style in the way he utilizes his time, his capabilities and the way he earns and spends and all the aspects of his worldly life.

As opposed to this if some externally visible things will be given importance over the real thing and will be unnecessarily be over emphasized and then without planting the seeds of real Taqwa and nurturing them then the result will be the same that I have described earlier. The first thing requires time and patience. It grows slowly and only after a period of time does it bear fruit just as it takes time for a seed to transform to a tree and give fruits and flowers. That is why people with a shallow temperament shun this path. The other thing can be created quickly and easily just as a piece of wood can be tied with some leaves and flowers and made to appear as a tree. This is the reason why this method of producing Taqwa is so popular. But obviously the natural requirements that are fulfilled by a real tree can never be fulfilled by these artificial ones.

EHSAAN

Now take Ehsaan which is the highest stage in Islam. Actually Ehsaan means to have an intense and deep love, true loyalty and sense of supreme sacrifice towards Allah, His Prophet (pbuh) and His religion which will make Muslims "Fana fil Islam" (ready to die for Islam). The basic impression of Taqwa is to have fear of God which motivates man to escape from the anger of God while the basic impression of

Ehsaan is to have love of God which motivates a man to seek His pleasure. Let us understand this difference through this example. Amongst the employees of the government are some who are discharging all their responsibilities with utmost hard work and dedication that have been entrusted to them. They follow all the rules and regulations and do not do anything which is objectionable in the eyes of the government. The other group of employees consist of those who are sincere, dedicated and ready to sacrifice their utmost and work very hard for the government. This group does not stop at only those duties that are assigned to them but they are always worried about how the interests of the state can be taken care of in the best possible way and in this mood they work more than their obligation and requirement. They are ready to sacrifice their selves, their wealth and their children if the state or the government is endangered. If the law is broken then it pains them. They become anxious when they see signs of rebellion against the government or state and then sacrifice their lives to try to quell it. They cannot imagine committing any deeds that are against the interests of the state. And they strive with their utmost to get rid of this problem. The inner desire of their heart is that their rule should be established in this world and their flag must flutter in all parts of the world.

Amongst these two categories the former are 'Muttaqi' (pious) of the government while the latter are it's 'Mohsin' (achievers of excellence). Although those who are Muttaqi also get promotion and higher ranks and they are placed in the register of good employees but the rank and prizes that the people of Ehsaan get are incomparable to the rest. Even though the Muttaqi are worthy of appreciation and trust but the real strength of Islam is the group of Mohsineen and the work that Islam wants to perform in this world can only be accomplished by them.

After understanding the reality of Ehsaan you yourself can assess that the people who watch the religion of Truth crushed by Kufr, who are mute spectators to the Divine laws being defied and trampled, who see that the Divine laws are not

implemented but in fact rejected officially, who witness that the rule of God is not supreme but the rebels of God hold sway. They observe that as the rule of Kufr is established there is a moral and social upheaval and the Muslim Ummah itself is rapidly falling into moral turmoil and having disorder in their deeds and practice. And even after seeing all this, their hearts do not stir neither do they get anxious to change this. In fact in stark contrast if they satisfy and reconcile themselves and the Muslim community at the dominance of the unIslamic rule then how can they be listed amongst the Mohsineen? And after committing such a big crime how can they be elevated to such a lofty pedestal just by offering supplementary prayers of 'Chasht', 'Ishraq' and 'Tahajjud? They do 'Zikr' and meditation, give lectures on Quran and Hadith, follow and implement certain non-fundamental things of jurisprudence and rigorously follow certain specific and small Sunnah and keep teaching the art of purifying souls in the seminaries and abodes in which all the intricacies of Hadith, Fiqh and Tasawwuf are present but the one thing that is most conspicuous by its absence is real religiousness or real piety which creates a state in that although one may not have given up one's life for evil but offering ones allegiance to evil is sufficient to degrade him to a loyalist of Evil.

You will see this difference between loyalists and non-loyal in worldly nation states in that if there is rebellion or uprising in the country or some part of the country is occupied by the enemy then the people who accept the government of the enemies and rebels and make a compromise with them or make a government under their tutelage in which the real reins of power remain in the hand of the enemy and they get some rights and privileges; then no nation or community will accept these to be patriots no matter how rigorously they adhere to wearing the national attire and scrupulously following the small and little nationalist rites and traditions.

Today you have the live example of nations who came out of the occupation of Germany. How are the people being treated who adopted the path of cooperation and compromise

at the time of German occupation? All these nations and communities have only one standard to measure patriotism and that is to what extent has the person opposed and fought enemy occupation, what has he done to destroy the enemy and what has he done to bring the government back to power who he had pledged allegiance and loyalty. Then God forbid, do you think that Allah does not have the power to identify His loyalists as people of little intellect in this world do? Do you think that He can be deceived by the length of beards, by the distance between ankles and trouser ends, by the movement of the rosary beads, by Zikr, by reciting some fixed religious text, by supplementary prayers, meditation and other such acts?

MISCONCEPTIONS

Gentlemen! One more last thing and I shall conclude my speech. Because of sustained wrong thinking since a long period of time the importance of small and openly visible things is so much ingrained in the minds of common Muslims that no matter how much attention is drawn towards the principles of religion, regulations and the real spirit of religiousness, piety and Islamic morals but still people are finally attracted to the petty issues and get stuck with the small visible things which have been made as the real religion. The symptoms of this disease are also found in a lot of our cadre and sympathisers. I exert all my efforts to make people understand the reality of Deen, which things of Deen are important and what has priority and what does not? But even after all these efforts I see that people are still obsessed with the external and visible deeds and give precedence to the unimportant things over principles. I have been overwhelmed with letters since the last three days requesting that the people of Jamaat (be told to) increase the length of their beards, their trousers must be shortened above the ankles and other such small things must be rigorously observed. I have also come to know that some people have expressed the opinion that they notice an acute lack of these things in the Jamaat which they term as 'Roohaniyat' (spirituality). But they themselves are not

able to describe what exactly they mean by spirituality. Hence they conclude that one must adopt the goal and methodology of this Jamaat but for spiritual training and purifying ones heart one should look towards the 'khanqahs' (monasteries). All these things point out that despite our best efforts people have still not understood Deen. Whatever I have explained to you now about Iman, Islam, Taqwa and Ehsaan; in it if I have added something of my own besides the teachings of the Quran and the Hadith then it should immediately be pointed out to me. But if you agree that these four things that I have described are according to the Book of God and the Prophet (pbuh) of God then please think that where the demands and requirements of Iman are themselves not being fulfilled and where Taqwa and Ehsaan are completely absent there which spirituality can be found which you are searching. And as far as the small things of the Shariah that you have assumed to be the primary requirements of Deen I shall once again describe and clarify their position so that I am absolved of my responsibility.

First of all please think calmly as to why did Allah send His Prophets (peace be upon them) to this world. After all what was lacking in this world, what were the problems and defects that were present that necessitated the sending of Prophets? Was it that people were not keeping beards and the Prophets were sent to make them do so or that people's trousers would cover and reach beyond their ankles and that the Prophets were sent to make their lengths shorter? Were the various acts of the Prophet (Sunnah) which you scrupulously follow not prevalent in this world and were the Prophets required to start their practice and implementation? If you reflect on these questions then you yourselves will answer that these were not the real problems and defects in society and this was not the mission for sending Prophets. Then the question remains as to what were the real problems and defects that had to be removed and what were the good and virtues that needed to be established. The answer is to this question can be nothing other than that the real problems that were spread throughout the world were

that people had moved away from the obedience and servitude of God, they were following their own man made laws and regulations and did not have any sense of responsibility and accountability towards God. Only because of this evil vices were born, wrong rules and practice became prevalent and the land was filled with corruption. Then the Prophets (peace be upon them) were also sent so that a sense of obedience to God, loyalty and accountability towards God is created. High morals should be encouraged and the affairs of this world should be run on the principles which give rise to goodness and virtue and which crushes evil and corruption. This was the only reason to send Prophets and finally this was the only reason to send Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in this world.

Now see what Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did to fulfil this mission, what method he adopted and followed what pattern or sequence. First of all the Prophet (pbuh) invited people towards Iman and then made that Iman firm and solid by deepening and strengthening its foundations. Then according to the demands and requirements of Iman by teaching and training the Prophet (pbuh) instilled the specialties of practical obedience and submission in the Muslims (i.e. Islam), moral purification (i.e. Taqwa) and a tremendous love and loyalty to God (i.e. Ehsaan). Then with the combined efforts of these sincere Muslims he (pbuh) started to replace the ungodly system of the old and prevalent Ignorance (Jahiliyat) with a just and pious system run by the moral and ethical principles of the Divine Laws. And then when these people (Sahaba) became Muslim, Muttaqi and Mohsin in all aspects like ones heart, soul, body, mind, morals, ideas and deeds and started doing the work which Allah wants His loyalists to do then and then only did Prophet (pbuh) started telling them about the decorum, attire, ways of eating drinking, ways of living and behaving and other visible things which are better and more appropriate for the pious. It means that he (pbuh) first transformed the raw material into molten gold and then minted gold coins out of it. He created soldiers first and then gave them uniforms. This is

the correct way to work which is very apparent by the study of the Quran and the Hadith.

If following the Sunnah means that one should follow the path of action which the Prophet (pbuh) adopted to fulfil the Will of God through His guidance, then believe me that it not following the Sunnah but going against it that without transforming people to real Momin, Muslim, Muttaqi and Mohsin they are being moulded into the external and apparently visible dye of the pious and some popular and accepted practices of the Mohsineen be imitated. It would be like putting the stamp of gold on pieces of iron and copper and put them into the market and to bring uniformed soldiers in the field without military training and without creating loyalty and a sense of supreme sacrifice. According to me this is pure fraud and that is the reason why these gold coins do not have any value in the market and neither can you attain any victory by this crowd of soldiers fit only for display.

Then what do you think will Allah appreciate? Just imagine that a person brings about true faith, he is aware of his obligations, has high morals, he restricts himself to the limits set by Allah and discharges the rights of loyalty and sacrifice but is useless as far as fashion is concerned and is not up to the mark according to the apparent and visible culture. His position shall be that of a good employee but a little uncultured. Maybe he may not get a higher position because of his boorish appearance. But do you think that because of this gruff and coarse demeanour his reward for loyalty will also be ignored and his Master will put him in the Hell fire only because he was not good looking and of good mannerism. Compare and contrast this with another person who is scrupulous to a fault in following the "Shariah-ee" fashion and is a stickler for cultural norms and manners but has defects in terms of loyalty, lacks dedication towards discharging ones obligations, has some weaknesses in his sense of honour because of the demands of his faith. Can you imagine that despite these weaknesses how much would God appreciate this person just for his culture and fashion? This is not a complicated legal matter for which you

will have to study books. Just by common sense one can judge that amongst the two which one is worthy of appreciation.

Even the people with lower intelligence definitely distinguish as to who really deserves appreciation. This British rule is there before you. You know how fashionable they are and how much they adore external manners and etiquette. But do you know what they appreciate most? The soldier who sacrifices his heart, mind and body for raising the flag of his country and does not flinch the least when the time comes for supreme sacrifice. He may be uncultured and unrefined according to their standards. He may not shave for days, may don uncivilized attire, may not observe etiquette while eating and drinking, may not know how to dance but despite all these defects they will elevate him, promote him and put him on a high pedestal. In contrast the person who is an example of fashion, culture, good manners and etiquettes but is weak in loyalty and offering sacrifice and when the time for trial and tribulation appears he gives precedence to his life, luxuries and personal interests over his duties, obligations and national honour. They will not give him any respect and probably might even court martial him. When the people of little intellect have this capacity then what do you imagine and think about God. Will he not differentiate between copper and gold or will He just look at the stamp over the coin or currency and accept it as having high value.

Please do not perceive that I am trying to belittle or reduce the importance of these external and outward things or giving orders to declare them to be unimportant which have been given to improve the outward and external aspects of life. I am of the opinion that a Momin must obey all such commandments as given by God and His Prophet (pbuh) and I also believe that Deen has come to improve both the internal and external of man. But what I want to impress upon you is that the first thing that is more important is internal and not external.

First you must worry about creating excellence within and then try to mould the external according to reality.

You must give priority and more importance to the qualities that are worthy of true appreciation by God and to elevate and promote was the real objective and mission of the Prophets. The external (Zahir) will automatically be elevated because of these qualities and if there is something missing then it will be covered and compensated as the various stages are covered and reached.

Dear Friends! I have delivered this long speech despite my weakness and illness only so that I can convey the Truth to you with complete clarification and relieve myself of this responsibility before God. Life is uncertain. Nobody knows when it will end. Hence I feel that I should be relieved of the responsibility of conveying the Truth. If there is something that requires explanation then please do ask and if I have said something against the Truth then please point it out and if I have delivered the Truth to you correctly then please bear witness (people raised their voices and said "we bear witness"). You are witness and so is God. I pray to Allah that He gives me and all of us the correct understanding of Deen and give us the Grace to fulfil all the demands and requirements of Deen. Amin!

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Nations Rise and Fall
Why?

NATIONS RISE AND FALL WHY?

[The following speech was delivered at a public meeting in Dar-ul-Islam near Pathankot on the 10th of May, 1947. The audience consisted of several Hindus and Sikhs, besides Muslims. The speech should be studied in the perspective of turbulent times prevailing at that time, just before the Partition of India]

Praise and Thanksgiving to the Lord

Praise and thanks giving to the Lord who created us, blessed us with reason and the power of understanding; endowed us with the discretion to sift right from wrong; and sent the best of His devoted servants to instruct and guide us. Peace and blessings be on those pious servants of God who instilled humanity into the progeny of Adam, taught them the principles of civilized living, made them aware of the real aim of human life and gave them such rules and regulations by following which they can achieve peace in this world and salvation in the Hereafter.

The Divine Law of the Rise and Fall of Nations

Ladies and Gentlemen, God who has created this world and has spread out this earth and has populated it with human beings is not the Being who acts rashly without design or purpose. He does not take a leap in the dark; He is not a whimsical Lord who reigns over the kingdom without any planning will. He has permanent laws, firm regulations and fixed rules by which He governs the universe. As the sun, the moon, the earth, the air, water, trees and animals are subject to His Law. As our birth and death, our childhood, youth and old age, our respiration, our digestion and circulation of blood and our sickness and health is controlled by the definite and indiscriminate laws of God, so in an exactly similar manner the

ups and downs of our history, our rise and fall, our progress or decay, our personal prospects and destiny of our nation or country are controlled by the same unavoidable and indiscriminate law of God. If it is not possible for a man to breathe through his eyes instead of his nose; if it is impossible for the heart to perform the functions of the stomach, then it is equally impossible that a nation by adopting the path which warrants decline according to the Divine Law, can rise to glory. If the reaction of fire upon all people is indiscriminately the same; if it is not hot for one individual and cold for another, then evil deeds, which are evil deeds in the sight of Divine Law, also cannot cause the decline of one and the rise of another. The Divine rules which govern the good or ill-fortune of a man cannot be altered or evaded by human beings. The Divine rules are neither inimical to not in favour of a particular person.

The First and Most Important Clause of the Divine Law

The first and the most important clause of Divine Law is this: "Construction pleases God; destruction displeases Him". As Master it is His desire that His world should be managed in right order; that the world should be made a fairer place; that the resources, the powers and the capabilities endowed by Him should be utilized in the best possible way. He most certainly does not like nor can He be expected to like that His world should be destroyed, devastated or spoiled with disorder, foul-play or tyranny and oppression. In the eyes of God only those candidates for management of the affairs of the world are approved for selection who possess constructive abilities of an extraordinary degree and He entrusts to them the authority to manage the affairs of the world.

Those Who Work Tremendous Havoc are Swept out of Effective Existence

God keeps a constant watch over what constructive and reformative measures they take and what havoc they bring

about in the world. Until the time their deeds of construction outweigh their deeds of destruction and until there is anyone else available who is likely to perpetrate less destruction, God perpetuates the rules of these people despite all their misdeeds and sins. But when the balance of their achievements is heavily inclined towards destruction and less towards construction, God removes them from authority and casts them away. In their place some other are installed to manage the affairs of the world subject to the same inflexible condition.

The Owner of a Garden and the Gardener

Such is the Law of Nature. Your reason will affirm that it should be so. If one of you owns a garden and he wants to give it under the charge of a gardener, what, tell me, will be his first and foremost demand from the gardener? The owner of the garden will require nothing from the gardener save that he should improve its condition and should not devastate it. The owner would certainly want the gardener to keep the garden in the best possible condition to develop it to the possible extent, to endeavour his best to increase its beauty and charm and to enhance its produce. The gardener who puts his heart and soul in his work and tends the garden with care and great skill; who arranges the passages; who tends the good trees and cleanses out all poisonous plants, brambles and dry brushes; who grows new species of fruit and flowers with his ingenuity and knowledge such a gardener will immensely please his master. The master will promote him and will never think of sacking such an able, dutiful and hard-working gardener. On the other hand, if the master finds that the gardener is unskilled as well as work shirker, and wilfully or unintentionally causes damage to his garden; and that the garden is filled with dirt; the passages are crumbling; in some parts the water is overflowing the channels while in other parts the flower beds are parched, grass, weeds and brambles are growing wildly; the flower plants and fruit trees are being callously cut down; fine trees are withering and thorny bushes are flourishing think then, how can he regard this gardener with favour? What kind of

recommendation, what type of supplication, what sort of an entreaty, the family consideration or other self-appointed rights can induce the master to continue the gardener in charge of his garden?

At best the master may relent to give the gardener a second chance with the admonition that he should mend his ways. But if the gardener pays no need to the admonition and continues the work of desolating the garden, what other alternative is there except that the master should eject him under disgrace and employ a new gardener in his place? Now consider that you show such deep concern for the good management of a small garden. God, who has handed over such a vast expanse of land containing so many resources into the charge of men has invested them with such great authority over His world and its resources-how can He be indifferent to the question as to whether you are engaged in construction or destruction of the world? If you are engaged in construction there is absolutely no reason why He should divest you of charge. But if you construct nothing and persist in your course of destroying and desolating his magnificent garden, God will acknowledge none of your claims to hold the charge of His garden, however strong the foundations of these claims be in your own conceit. God will administer some warnings; He will grant you a few periods of grace to mend your ways; at last, He will inevitably eject you from the charge.

Difference in the Outlook of the Master and the Servant

In this case, the outlook of God is different from that of men in the same manner as the outlook of the proprietor of the garden differs from that of the gardener. Suppose two or four generations of a certain family have been tending a garden. A forbearer of this family was employed in this garden on the basis of his knowledge and skill. His descendants also gave a good account of themselves. The master felt it needless to remove these good people and employ new hands. Since they were doing well, they had the pre-eminent right over others. In this way, this family was firmly rooted in the service of this

garden. But the present generation of this family is unworthy, inept, inefficient and irresponsible. It possesses no skill in gardening. It is spoiling the whole place. And yet it claims that it has been the keeper of this garden since time of its forefathers. Its great grandfather has laid out this garden. Hence it has a hereditary claim over this garden. It is by no means fair to evict it and appoint another keeper to look after this garden. This is the outlook of these incapable gardeners. But can the master concur with the viewpoint of his unworthy employees? Will not the master say that from his point of view good upkeep of the garden is the foremost duty of a gardener? He will say, 'I did not lay out this garden for the benefit of your forebear, rather I had employed him to look after it, your rights over this garden are conditional upon your skill and good service. If you tend the garden with skill, your rights shall be granted. What grudge can I bear towards my old gardeners that I should sack them despite their good work and try new hands needlessly? But on the other hand, if you ruin and lay waste the garden for the upkeep of which you have been employed, I cannot grant any of your rights. There are other candidates standing by. I shall hand over the charge to them and you will serve under their orders. If you do not mend your ways even at these stage and prove yourselves good for-nothing even as subordinates and cause deterioration, you will be turned out and replaced by new servants.

The Difference Between the Divine and Human Outlook

The same difference of viewpoint, which we find, between the master and the gardeners exist between the Master and His creatures, the people of this world. In whichever part of the land various nations of the world inhabit, they claim that the region is their motherland. They argue they have lived there for several generations. They have a hereditary claim over that country. Hence the government of the country should be in their own hands. No alien has the right to govern them. But the real Master of the world God-does not concur with this viewpoint. He does not recognize these nationalistic claims.

God does not concede the hereditary claims of nations that whatever happens they shall not be dislodged from the control of their territories. God watches only the performance of a nation in her own country. If that nation is engaged in reform and construction; if she expends her energies in the development and reconstruction of her country, if she is engrossed in uprooting the evils and cultivating virtues, then the Master of this universe says, "Yes, verily, you deserve to rule over this land. You have inhabited this country for long and you are a worthy people. Your right over this land is permanent". But if opposite is the case; if destruction is going space and construction is held in abeyance; if God's earth is being filled with evil and virtue is banished from it; if God-given resources of the earth are being mercilessly wasted away instead of being put to some constructive use in that case, God will first administer to them some mild shocks and follow them up with severe jolts in order that these people may take heed and mend their ways. When these people do not give up their refractory behaviour even after these warnings, they are dispossessed of their right to govern that land and another people, who are comparatively superior in virtue, are installed in power over them. The process, however, does not stop at this point. If, even after coming under the subjugation of a foreign people, the natives of a country, still do not display any capability and skill and their performance shows destructive rather than constructive tendencies, God then eliminates this nation and raises another people to take their place. In this case, the Divine viewpoint is always that which a master ought to adopt under these circumstances. For the administration of His land, He takes no account of the hereditary and birth rights of the various candidates and claimants. What He looks for in the candidates is who among them possesses the greatest ability for doing good and the lesser inclination towards causing devastation. At a given period of time, the candidates who are best qualified according to this standard are chosen and until such time as their constructive achievements outweigh their destructive deeds or until a better candidate who

has a comparatively lesser capacity for confounding matters is not forthcoming, the management of the land remains in the hands of the incumbents.

The Evidence of History

History bears witness to other fact that God has always managed the affairs of His earth on the principle, which I have described above. Why go far? Let us survey the history of our own country. When the creative capabilities of the original inhabitants of this country were spent, God appointed the Aryans, who had the best creative talents among the contemporary peoples, to administer this country. After conquering this subcontinent, they founded a glorious civilization. They devised various sciences and arts, explored resources of the soil, dug out the treasures of the earth and used them for constructive purposes. They created more than they demolished. As long as they were equipped with these creative potentialities, they remained at helm of affairs of the land despite many vicissitudes in the history. Invaders marched upon them with full might but were repulsed because they were not better qualified to rule than the Aryans. The onslaughts of the invaders were in the nature of warnings administered at times when the Aryans showed signs of deterioration. But at last when they set upon the evil course and began to degenerate; when they started destroying more and creating little; when they were sunk in the depth of moral degradation the traces of which can still be witnessed in the 'Bam-Margi Movement'; when they artificially split up mankind and created divisions in their society on the grounds of caste and colour, and arranged their society in the vertical form like a ladder in which he who sat on the upper rung of the ladder became a master and the man sitting on the rung just below him became his subservient; when they subjected millions of human beings to hideous persecution which is still extant in the shape of the cult of untouchability, when they closed the doors of knowledge upon common masses, when their pundits sat over the treasures of knowledge coiled like snakes; when their

governing classes had no other care except to extort their harshly imposed dues and live merrily on the earnings of their subjects it was at this juncture that Almighty God divested them of power over this land and Central Asian peoples were provided an opportunity to work here who had at the moment in history imbibed the superior values of life under the impress of the Movement of Islam.

Muslim Rule Over India

These People remained at the helm of affairs in this country for several centuries and many native born people who had embraced Islam also became partners in the rule. There is no blinking the fact that these people were guilty of much destruction, but their creative achievements always surpassed their chaotic deeds. India owes to them or to their begin influence developmental work spread over several centuries. They spread the light of knowledge, brought about reforms in ideas, culture and civilization. They turned the country's means and resources to the best advantage according to the standards of the age and established an efficient judicial system, which, although, far below the real standards set by Islam, was yet far superior to the past system and to the systems then prevailing in the neighbouring countries. However, in the end even the Muslim rulers began to degenerate like their predecessors. Their constructive talents deteriorated and they began to exhibit destructive tendencies. They too undermined the solidarity of their society by creating social gradations, practicing racial discrimination and fanning class distinction, which resulted in several moral, political and cultural evils. The Muslim rulers too turned from justice to oppression and inclined heavily towards the latter. They forgot the responsibilities of the State and took interest only in the gains, mostly unjust gains that the State could confer on them. They abandoned the works of development and acts of reform and began to dissipate the powers and means that God had bestowed on them. They expended their energies mostly in those activities, which led to decadence of life. They had

grown so indolent and steeped in love of ease and pleasure that after the final debacle when the royal family was ignominiously expelled from Delhi's Red Fort, the princes those who laid claims to ruler ship only yesterday were too weak to run for their lives, because they had long ago given up walking on the earth. The moral degradation of the Muslim masses had aggravated to such an extent that from the common man to the highest dignitary they had lost all sense of adherence to anything higher than loyalty to self-interest. In this state of moral bankruptcy nothing could prevent them from bartering away their religion, nation and country for mean personal ends. Muslims became mercenary soldiers in millions whose moral standard was just like pet dogs. They were ever ready to transfer their allegiance to any master who promised them a loaf of bread and were prepared to hunt down their compatriots at the bidding of their masters. Little did they realize the meanness of the situation that by acting as base mercenaries they were helping the foreign enemy to reduce their country to subjugation? Even a man of the calibre of Ghalib (A renowned India Muslim poet during the empire of the Mughals) boasts: "Military service has been the hereditary profession of my forefathers for hundreds of generations". It never occurred to the great poet even for a single moment that the profession of a mercenary is a disgraceful one and is not something to be proud of.

Dismissal of the Muslims from Rule

When the Muslims reached such a state of moral turpitude, God resolved to oust them from power. The administration of India fell vacant for new candidates. At this time four contenders for power were in the field: the Marathas, the Sikhs, the British and some Muslim nobles. If you take an objective view and look at the historical events of that period and subsequent developments without national bias, you will be convinced that none of the contenders for power commanded those constructive capabilities, which the British so eminently possessed. The British had weaknesses but the Maratha, the

Sikh and Muslim adversaries were worse in this respect. None of them could have been able to introduce the reforms that the British did. There was much that British destroyed, but the others would certainly have destroyed far more. Viewing generally, the British would appear to be possessing several shortcomings in various respects. But when viewed in comparison with their contemporary rivals, their virtues would outnumber their faults. It is for this reason that God once again set aside the unjustified manmade principle: "Only the native of a country are destined to rule over it whether they work for its betterment or cause deterioration" God once again reinforced the historical principle:" No, the land belongs exclusively to God. It is He alone has the right to appoint or dismiss a ruler. God does not take account of any racial, national or hereditary claims of a people to rule. He decides in favour of those who would on the whole establish an equitable and just rule".

The Holy Qur'an says:

قُلِ اللّٰهُمَّ مٰلِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَآءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَآءُ ۚ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَآءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَآءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۖ اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ (آل عمران)

"Say, O Allah, Master of the dominion! Thou givest dominion to whomsoever Thou willst and takest away the same from whomsoever Thou likest. Thou bestowst dignity on whomsoever Thou likest and cast into disgrace whomsoever Thou likest. Thou alone dispense all Goodness and Thou alone art Omnipotent" (3:26).

In accordance with this Divine Law, God brought a nation from thousands of miles whose number in this country never surpassed the figure of three or four lakhs. They utilized the men and resources of this country to subjugate the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs and took the reins of government into their own hands. Hundreds of millions of natives lived as serfs of an insignificant number of Englishmen. A single Englishman usually ruled over a vast district single-handed without the aid of any of his compatriots sharing his burden.

During this period the Indian people served as functionaries under the orders of foreign masters; they did what they were told; they did nor at on their own. We should admit and if we refuse to admit, we would stand guilty of denying the reality, that during the entire course of the British rule everything creative that happened in the life of India was accomplished by the British or was brought about under the impetus of the British. When we compare the present condition of India with those times when the British took over the government, we cannot deny that the roll of their constructive achievements is longer than their misdeeds. The natives had no capacity to achieve what the British accomplished. Hence we see that the decision that God has made in regard to the fate of India in mid-eighteenth century was correct.

Expulsion of the British

The British have now reached the limit of their creative achievements. They can no more do anything constructive. What good the British are capable of doing, the others can now do equally well. On the other hand, the balance of their misdeeds has become alarmingly heavy and as long as they remain at the helm of affairs, they will continue to misrule and cause havoc rather than do some good to India. The charge sheet against them is so long that it is difficult to go over it one sitting, nor, indeed, it is needed to give a description of it as it is known to all and sundry. The Divine Will now is that the British should be expelled from power in India. They have shown good sense in their resolve to leave India of their own accord. If they had not done so, they would be expelled in disgrace by violent means, for the inexorable law of God does not permit the continuance of British rule any longer.

Freedom - A Test for the People of India

This moment through which we are passing is one of those turning points in history when the Real Sovereign of the earth brings the rule of one authority to an end and decides to

transfer the administration of a country to a new authority. The transfer of power which is being arranged in this country should not mislead you into thinking that it is a final dispensation whereby the administration of the country is being handed over to the native inhabitants. You perhaps consider it a plain matter that the foreigners who had ruled the country for long are now quitting and the administration would automatically be restituted to the natives. The matter is not as simple as that. God's decisions are not made in this manner. God did not in the first place install these foreigners in power without purpose, nor is He now hosting them without reason. God did not dispossess the natives of their rule without cause, nor will He reinstate them in power without design. The people of India stand as candidates for power today. The Hindus, the Muslims the Sikhs all demand power. Since these three groups are the older inhabitants of the land, so they are being given the first chance to rule over the country. But this is not a permanent dispensation; their appointment to rule is probationary. If they demonstrate their capacity for doing more good than evil, their rule will be made permanent. Otherwise if the people of India demolish more than they can build, they will soon witness their eviction from power and God will choose some other nation from far or near to take charge of the administration of this country. In such cases, there is no appeal against Divine dispensation. Having demonstrated their unworthiness to the whole world would they have cogent right as to make any appeal for the revocation of the Divine order? And if they cast all shame to the winds and persist in their wailing who will sympathies with their plight?

Our Moral Condition

Let us survey now the capacities, abilities, virtues and achievements of the people of India the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs which they can present before God in support of their petition that He should restore power to them. I trust that you will bear with me if at this stage I read before you openly and unsparingly every item of the charge sheet, which has been

indiscriminately served on the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs by the 'Court of Morality'. I am not very happy in describing the vices of my nation or my compatriots; in fact, my heart bleeds with sorrow at the contemplation of their perverse morals. But whether it pleases them or not, I consider it imperative to speak the truth on their face. I foresee the terrible consequence of their vices, which they will not only witness but will have to endure in future. I fear that these vices will throw them into the abyss of disgrace. We, you none of us will be spared from the horrible results of our immoral acts. I mention these evils with a deep sense of sorrow so that those who have ears may listen and devise measures of reform. You can judge the moral standards of the individual members of a society in the light of your own experience and observations. What percentage of men from among us hesitates to usurp the rights of others , abstains from gaining profit by unlawful means, or refrains from telling a 'useful' lie or committing some 'profitable act' of dishonesty on the ground that such deeds are morally wrong? What percentage of men is prompted by moral considerations in refraining from committing crimes or perpetrating an evil on such occasions where the long arm of the law cannot apprehend them or where they hope to escape from the clutches of the law? How many persons work for the welfare of others, serve others with sympathy and selflessness or treat others fairly and politely without having a personal axe to grind? What is the ratio of those traders among the business community who do not indulge in deceit, fraud, false representation or unlawful profiteering? How many of our industrialists pay due regard to the consumer and national interest simultaneous with the motive to earn maximum profits? How many of our landowners have the humanity to realize that by hoarding grain and making huge profits by selling it at highest rates, they are causing lakhs and even crores of people to suffer the distress of hunger? How many of our capitalists have amassed their hoards of money without oppression of the violation of the rights of others or without adopting unfair means? How many of our working people earn

their wages and salaries by doing an honest day's work? How many of our civil servants are not guilty of graft, embezzlement, tyranny, callousness, indifferent to duty, illegal gains and misuse of authority? How many of our lawyers, doctors, hakims, journalists, publishers, authors and self-styled 'Servants of the Nation' feel some sense of shame when they use unsavoury means to promote their self-interest and inflict mental, moral, financial and physical harm on the people of God. It would not be an exaggeration to say that hardly five per cent are severely infected with this disease. The epidemic has spared none among the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians or the Harijans; all are equally in the grip of this disease without any discrimination. The moral standards of all these communities are alarmingly low and none of them can claim superiority over others in this respect.

The Consequences of Moral Decay

When the moral decay had degenerated a very large number of individuals, it was natural that this disease which had corroded our morals should assume an epidemic form and manifest itself in the collective behaviour of our people. The first sign of this impending storm was the overcrowding of passengers on the railway trains due to war emergency. The selfishness, callousness and cruelty which people belonging to the same nationality and the same country exhibited towards one another was a clear symptom of our rapidly deteriorating morality. To the hardships of shortages and inflation were added hoarding and black marketing on a vast scale. During the artificially created dreadful Bengal famine, a class of our people ruthlessly subjected millions of their compatriots to starvation to death for the sake of their own capital gains. All these were primary symptoms of the malaise. The lava of wickedness, baseness, beastliness and cruelty which had been boiling for a long time suddenly burst out and its fires are now raging over the length and breadth of India in the form of communal riots. The new chapter of communal strife among the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs started by the Calcutta riots

have given these three communities an opportunity to exercise their vilest instincts. The most unimaginable deeds of inhumanity are being openly and unashamedly perpetrated by citizen in and around their localities. In large places almost all inhabitants have turned into lawless 'goondas' and are indulging in such perverse crimes that were hitherto beyond the imagination of the fiercest goonda. Infants have been butchered while they were suckling the breasts of their mothers. Men have been stripped naked and raped in the presence of crowds comprising of thousands of people. Daughters, wives and sisters have been assaulted before the eyes of the helpless fathers, husbands and brothers. Houses of worship and religious books have been desecrated in the most degrading fashion. The sick, the wounded and the old folks have been subjected to inhuman violence. The passengers have been hurled down from running trains. They have hacked the limbs of living persons and hunted down the un-armed and helpless human beings like animals. Neighbours have sacked the homes of neighbours. Friends have betrayed friends. The persons responsible for providing shelter have themselves abrogated their pledge for the protection of the people the forces responsible for maintaining law and order (Police, Army and the judicial Magistrates) have openly joined the communal riots. They have not only personally committed acts of violence, but have abetted, supported and guided the violent operations of their chosen factions. In brief, no form of cruelty and high handedness, callousness and base villainy has been left untouched during the last few months to which we as a whole have not fallen victims. And the full venom has not been exhausted yet. There are signs that all this is shortly going to recur on a larger and a more dreadful scale. Do you imagine that all the happenings are the outcome of some casual disturbance? If this is what you think, you are suffering from an illusion. I have just pointed out to you that ninety-five per cent of the inhabitants of this country are victims of a moral disease. How can the collective behaviour of a nation remain sane and healthy when such a large number of her individual

members are morally degenerated? It is for this reason that the three communities, the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs, no longer attach any value and importance to virtues like truth, justice and righteousness. A truthful, honest and upright person is reduced to an object of scorn. To dissuade someone from evil ways and exhort righteousness these are today the most in tolerable crimes in the governing code of their society. They have turned their faces from equity and fair play; they scorn all talk of justice and right conduct. Each community idolizes only those people who advocate her unjustified demands and claims, fan the flames of prejudice against others and ready to fight for the fulfilment of their fair or foul ends. It is on these grounds that these nations have carefully selected the worst individuals from among them to act as their representatives. They handpicked the most notorious criminals of their community and installed them as their leaders in action. Individuals who possessed the basest morals, had no sense of honour, and knew no principles rose as leaders of these communities and won the greatest popularity in the field of journalism. They drove their degenerate communities on the road to corruption harder and faster. Instead of converging the contradictory national demands on an equitable point, they escalated them to the point of conflict. To the conflict of economic and political interests they added the fire of fury, hatred and vendetta and continued to whip up these evil passions. For years, they incited their people with incendiary speeches and writings to fight like dogs and wolves. They filled the hearts of all and sundry with the fire of evil passions and blind vendetta. The storm that is raging before you today is not temporary or seasonal. It is a natural result of the several disruptive causes which have been at work within our society for a long period of time. This resultant catastrophe is not temporary or short lived, but the situation will continue to aggravate day by day as long as the disruptive influences are at work in our society. This is a poisonous crop, which has now ripened after years of sowing, and watering and no one can say

for how long you and your coming generations will continue to reap it.

Take Stock of Your Deeds

Gentlemen, it is high time that you consider dispassionately that at this juncture in our country's history when plans for a change-over of administration are on the anvil, what proof of our own worth and ability are we presenting before the Sovereign Lord of this earth? The time calls upon us to demonstrate by our actions that if it be the Will of the Lord to bestow the administration of this land upon us, we shall make it an abode of happiness. We shall establish justice and equity in this land. We shall promote sympathy, a spirit of cooperation and a feeling of kindness for each other in this country. We shall harness the resources of this country for our own welfare and the betterment of humanity at large. We shall uphold righteousness and suppress all evils. On the contrary, however, we are representing ourselves as the greatest devastators, the matchless mischievous and cruel monsters that if He hands over the authority in this land to us, we shall lay waste whole villages and towns, burn to ashes entire localities and hamlets; we would put lesser premium on human life than even over the lives of flies and mosquitoes; we would degrade women and violate their modesty; we would slaughter children; we would give no quarter to the old, sick and the wounded; we would desecrate the houses of worship and religious books without ignoble passions; and the earth which you populated with living beings will be littered with human dead bodies and the shells of gutted buildings. Does your conscience really admit the possibility that having presented this black picture of your deeds, vices, and crimes, God will yet consider you worthy of trust and prefer to transfer the administration into your hands? Having witnessed these crimes will He yet say "Well done! Ye who are the progeny of My former gardeners! You have the preeminent right to look after my garden. Indeed I had laid out this garden for the only purpose that it be uprooted, ruined, desolated and be filled with

all the stinking rubbish. Take it under your charge and destroy it as much as you like".

Think of Reforming Yourself

I am not saying all this to you so that you may lose all hope for the future. I myself am not disappointed nor do I want others to feel that way. The idea that I wish to convey to you is that the people of India by their own folly and ignorance are bent upon losing a golden opportunity which only once in centuries God Almighty grants to people at the time of historic change-over in a country's administration. It was high time that they demonstrated their best qualities and the most excellent abilities in order to qualify themselves in the eyes of God for the guardianship of His land. Today, however, the people of India are zealously completing with each other in acts of oppression, ferocity and cruelty so as to win the greatest disapprobation of God. Such manners do not qualify a nation for achieving freedom, progress and glory. On the other hand, these acts entail the danger that Divine Judgment may again condemn us to slavery and degradation. Hence all sensible people who possess awareness of the situation should endeavour to rectify matters.

How can you rectify matters?

At this stage a question will arise in your minds as to how can we rectify matters? I am prepared to answer this question. In this darkness there is only one glimmer of hope for us. Degradation has not yet enveloped our entire population. There are at least five per cent of people who are immune from the evil infection that is raging today. We can capitalize on these people to launch a movement for reform.

First Step-Organization of the Righteous Elements

The first step in the movement for reformation is to identify, select and organize the righteous elements in our society. As ill-luck would have it the evil forces in our society

are well-organized and operated under a systematic planning, but the forces of good are in a disorganized state. Good people are certainly there, but they are in disarray. There is no mutual cooperation and coordination among them. They have no programme and do not act in concert. Due to these reasons they have been reduced to an ineffective crowd. Every now and then a God-fearing man raises his voice against the prevailing evils, but when no support is forthcoming from any quarter his single voice too is stilled in disappointment. Sometimes a man openly proclaims what is right and just, but the organized forces of evil throttle his voice and the righteous do no more than praise his boldness in private. Sometimes a man cannot hold himself when he witnesses the acts of inhumanity and makes a protest, but the ferocious elements rush upon him and suppress him and the fate of this man serves as a deterrent to those who still feel the pricks of conscience within their soul. This state of affairs must end. If we do not want that our country should suffer the wrath of God and a number of the righteous and the evil among us should fall victim to the torments that the wrath of God will bring upon us, we should earnestly endeavour to collect and organize the righteous elements who have escaped the prevailing epidemic of moral turpitude. This organized force should check the rising tide of this mischief, which is driving us towards a catastrophic end. There is no cause for concern even though this righteous element is hopelessly outnumbered. If this creative minority unites itself and the members of this creative minority unites itself and the members of little group base their individual and collective conduct on the principles of truth, fair play, righteousness, sincerity, honesty and firmness of purpose and if they adopt a well-considered programme for the most satisfactory solution of life's problems and for administering the affairs of the world in an equitable manner, there is not a shadow of doubt that the organized forces of evil despite their numerical strength and fatal weapons will be annihilated by this small but organized body of the God-fearing people. Human nature abhors wickedness. Human nature is liable to be

misled; it is liable to be deformed, yet the inborn virtue of goodness instilled into it by the Lord can never be eliminated. The number of those who are preoccupied with evil, and become its standard bearers is really small. Similarly there are very few people who are fully devoted to virtue and are actively engaged in establishing the noble causes. Inhumanity possesses mixed tendency of virtue and wickedness. They are not particularly inclined towards evil, nor are they excessively drawn towards virtue. It is the standard-bearers of good or evil who influence and guide the sentiments of the majority of common people and their inclinations wholly depend on whether the viewpoint of the righteous is transmitted to them first or whether the forces of evil steal a march over the forces of good and succeed in drawing them to their side. If the standard-bearers of good do not enter the field at all and make no efforts to guide the people on the path of virtue, the void thus created will be filled by spearheads of the evil forces and they will draw the people to the path of evil. But if the standard-bearers of righteousness enter the field of action and perform the task of reforming the society in right earnest, the leaders of evil forces cannot maintain their hold on the masses for much longer. These two forces will confront each other in the sphere of morality, and in this combat evil can never dominate virtue. Falsehood may expend its full force against truth, dishonesty may use all its stratagems against honesty; corruption may content with piety with all the power it can muster, yet the final round will always be won by truth, piety and honesty. The world is not so insensible that having tasted the sweetness of righteousness and endured the bitterness of evil it should yet adjudge bitter evil better than sweet piety.

Difference between construction and destruction
Second Step—A Clear Concept of Good and Evil

In order to accomplish the task of reforming a society, a clear concept of good and evil is next in importance to the organization of the righteous people. We should have a clear conception of what is evil and what is good, so that we may

endeavour to eliminate evil and enforce piety with all the power at our command. I do not propose to discuss the matter in detail on this occasion. However, I would like to present before you a brief sketch of these two factors.

Elements Causing Deterioration

The elements, which introduce deterioration in human life, can be grouped into four categories:

1. Lack of God-Consciousness

When the fear of God is banished from human affairs, it results in the 'prevalence of injustice, tyranny, corruption and all forms of moral degradation in the world.

2. Indifference to the Divine Guidance

An indifferent attitude towards the Guidance vouchsafed by God has done away with all permanent canons of moral conduct, which may be observed in human affairs. For this reason, the entire behaviour at the individual, group or national level is controlled by self-interest, self-gratification and love of pleasure. As a result people have become unscrupulous and are bent upon achieving their selfish goals by fair means or foul. They do not hesitate to achieve their ends by the vilest and all the possible nefarious means.

3. Selfishness

Selfishness not only impels people to violate the right of others, but also manifests itself in the form of racialism nationalism and class distinctions on a large scale, which result in conflicts of various types.

4. Inactiveness or Licentiousness

Because of inactiveness or licentiousness man either does not make use of God-given capabilities or puts them to wrong use; either he does not harness God-given resources or

employs them for unlawful purposes. In the first case the Divine Law does not permit inactive and incompetent people to hold the reigns of authority in His land for long. God replaces such inadequate people with those who possess constructive talents. In the second case, when the destructive deeds of a wicked people outnumber their constructive actions, God throws them out of power; and often these people are annihilated by the explosions caused by their own destructive deeds.

Elements of Reform

In contrast to the above, the elements which create beauty and order in human society can also be divided under four heads:

1. Fear of God

Fear of God is the only reliable guarantee of preventing one from committing evil deeds and setting him on the path of righteousness. Fear of God is the only seed which blossoms into truth, justice, trustworthiness, righteousness, restraint and all other virtues which serve as the bed-rock of a peaceful and progressive human culture and civilization. Although these virtues can be acquired through these sources does not exceed beyond a certain limit and the foundations of these virtues are never secure but are liable to be rocked. The fear of God is the only sure means of deterring man from evil ways and directing his steps firmly on the path of virtue and salutary effects of the fear of God on human affairs are not only seen on a limited scale but can be witnessed in all spheres of human life on a vast scale.

2. Obedience to the Divine Guidance

Obedience to the Commands of God is the only means of bringing individuals, social, national and international behaviour under the control of a permanent system of moral principles. As long as man is free to choose morals that suit his

purposes, he cannot practice what he preaches. In books he writes one set of glorious rules in letters of gold, but is guided in practice by a separate set of rules, which promote his self-interest. He bases his own claims upon some fixed moral rules, but in considering the claims of others he alters the same rules from moment to moment as opportunity, expediency, passion or need demands. It is 'self-interest', not 'right' around which the moral life of man revolves. He does not believe that he should adapt his practices to the rules of justice and fair play; instead it is his desire that all moral rules should bend to serve his own interest. This then is the root cause of the wrong behaviour of nations and the breaking out of deterioration in the world. In contrast to this man can only achieve the ideals of peace, prosperity, well-being and glory by adopting a moral code the pivotal point of which is not self-interest but fairness and justice. This moral code should be the supreme arbitrator in all human affairs, individual or national, commercial or political or in matters of war and peace. It is evident that the source of such a moral code are the Commandments of God and man can abide by them only if he surrenders his own right to alter or introduce amendments in the Divine Law and succumbs to the Will of God in all matters.

3. The Organization of Human Society

There should be a system built up on the principles of equal status and equal rights of all human beings instead of on the principle of safeguarding the vested interests of individuals, nations, races or classes. No unreasonable distinctions, no stratification of high or low, no casteism and no artificial prejudices should be allowed to exist in human society. No one should enjoy preferential rights and no artificial handicaps or barriers should mar the opportunity to develop his full potential. This society should be so broad-based so as to encompass the entire human race on a footing of equality.

4. Righteous Actions

Righteous action means to make full and proper use of the God-given potentialities and resources. Gentlemen! These four elements constitute what is called "the making" and "reformation". It would be a boon to us if we form among us an organization of righteous persons who would constantly endeavour to eradicate the causes of destruction and devise means of construction. If their endeavours succeed in drawing the people of this country to the path of righteousness, God Almighty is not so unjust as to dispossess this nation of the right to rule her own country and thrust foreign rulers on her. But, God forbid, if the struggle of the righteous people comes to naught, we cannot predict what fate is in store for us, for you, or for the citizens of this land.

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Jihad in Islam

Jihad in Islam

[This Address was delivered on Iqbal Day, April 13, 1939, at the Town Hall, Lahore]

The word 'Jihad' is commonly translated into English as 'the Holy War' and for a long while now the word has been interpreted so that it has become synonymous with a 'mania of religion'. The word 'Jihad' conjures up the vision of a marching band of religious fanatics with savage beards and fiery eyes brandishing drawn swords and attacking the infidels wherever they meet them and pressing them under the edge of the sword for the recital of Kalima. The Artists have drawn this picture with masterly strokes and have inscribed these words under it in bold letters: *'The History of this Nation is the tale of Bloodshed'.*

The irony is that the painters are no other than those benefactors of ours who themselves have been engaged in an extremely unholy war for centuries on end. They themselves present the picture of robbers who armed to the teeth with all kinds of deadly weapons, have set upon the world pillaging it for the capture of new markets of trade, resources of raw material, open lands for colonization and yielding valuable metals, so that they may procure fuel for their ever burning fire of avarice. They fight not for the cause of God but for the satisfaction of their lust and hunger. For them, it is a sufficient excuse for invading a nation because the territory of that nation contains mines, or their lands yield bumper crops, or oil has been struck there or they can be exploited as profitable markets for their manufactured goods or that their surplus population can be settled on the lands belonging to the intended victims. In the absence of all the other excuses, they consider it a grave crime on the part of a nation if she happens to live en route to a country already captured by them or the one they plan to

capture. Whatever we did is now part of history, past and gone, but their deeds are a present matter witnessed by the world day and night. Asia, Africa, Europe and America no portion of this planet has been spared from bloodbath resulting from their unholy war. Their skill is, however, commendable that they have painted our picture so gory and dark that their own picture was overshadowed and was completely hidden from the view. Our own simplicity is amazing too. When we saw this picture of ours painted by the foreigners, we were so taken aback that we never thought of looking behind the canvas and seeing the visage of the painter. Instead we started offering apologies in this manner "Sir, what do we know of war and slaughter. We are pacifist preachers like the mendicants and religious divines. To refute certain religious beliefs and convert the people to some other faith instead, that is the be-all and end-all of our enthusiasm. What concerns have we with sabres! Yes, indeed, we plead guilty to one crime, though, that whenever someone else attacked us, we attacked him in self-defence. Now, of course, we have renounced that also. The crusade which is waged by swords has been abrogated for the satisfaction of your honour. Now 'Jihad' only refers to waging war with the tongue and pen. To fire cannons and shoot with guns is the privilege of your honour's government and wagging tongues and scratching with pens is our pleasure."

Causes of Misunderstanding about the Holy War

In any case, this is a part of political tactics. But from a purely scholastic standpoint when we analyse the causes due to which the red nature of the 'Holy War for the Cause of God' has become difficult to understand not only for non-Muslims but Muslims themselves, we discover two major and basic misconceptions. The first misunderstanding is that they consider Islam to be a religion in the conventional sense of the term 'religion'. The second misconception is that they take Muslims to be a 'Nation' in the technical sense of this term. These two misunderstandings have not only mixed up the concept of Jihad' but have changed the picture of Islam as a

whole and have wholly misrepresented the position of the Muslim people. In common terminology 'religion' means nothing more than a hotchpotch of some beliefs, prayers and rituals. If this is what 'religion' means, then, it should, indeed, be a private affair. You should be free to entertain any belief and worship any deity whom your conscience is ready to accept. If you are over-zealous and ardent devotees of this type of religion, go and preach it to the whole world and engage yourselves in declamations with the protagonists of other religions. There is no reason why you should take up a sword? Do you wish to convert people to your faith by killing them? We are forced to admit the point that if you regard Islam as a religion in the conventional meaning of the term and if, indeed, Islam be a conventional type of religion, the necessity for 'Jihad' cannot be justified. Similarly, the term 'Nation' connotes no more than a homogeneous group of men who have joined themselves in a distinct entity on the basis of fundamental and shared traits. A group of people who attain to nationhood according to this definition of the term, rises or can rise to arms under two circumstances: either when some other group of people with the intention of depriving them of their lawful rights attack them or when they themselves wishing to usurp other people's rights launch an attack on them. There is an unassailable moral justification for taking up arms in the first case (although some saintly personages have declared even armed self-defence a sin). But launching an armed attack on other people with the purpose of snatching away their lawful rights can be justified by no one except a few dictators. Even statesmen of vast Empires like those of Britain, France dare not to justify this course of action.

What Jihad really is?

So if an Islam be a 'Religion' and the Muslims are a 'Nation'. 'Jihad' (on account of which it has been accorded the dignity of 'The Best of all Worships' in Islam) becomes a useless term. But the truth is that Islam is not the name of a 'Religion', nor is 'Muslim' the title of a 'Nation'. In reality

Islam is a revolutionary ideology and programme which seeks to alter the social order of the whole world and rebuild it in conformity with its own tenets and ideals. 'Muslim' is the title of that International Revolutionary Party organized by Islam to carry into effect its revolutionary programme. And 'Jihad' refers to that revolutionary struggle and utmost exertion which the Islamic Party brings into play to achieve this objective. Like all revolutionary ideologies, Islam shuns the use of current vocabulary and adopts a terminology of its own, so that its own revolutionary ideals may be distinguished from common ideals. The word 'Jihad' belongs to this particular terminology of Islam. Islam purposely rejected the word 'harb' and other Arabic words bearing the same meaning of 'war' and used the word 'Jihad' which is synonymous with 'struggle', though more forceful and wider in connotation. The nearest correct meaning of the word 'Jihad' in English can be expressed as under: 'To exert one's utmost in promoting a cause'.

The question is why was the use of this new word preferred to the exclusion of all other synonyms? The answer to this question is none else than that the word 'war' was and is still being used for struggles between Nations and States which are waged for the achievement of individual or national self-interest. The motivation behind these conflicts are such individual or collective purposes as are completely devoid of any ideological basis or support for certain principles. Since Islamic War does not belong to this category, Islam shuns the use of the word 'war' altogether. Islam has no vested interest in promoting the cause of this or that Nation. The hegemony of this or that State on the face of this earth is irrelevant to Islam. The sole interest of Islam is the welfare of mankind. Islam has its own particular ideological standpoint and practical programme to carry out reforms for the welfare of mankind. Islam wishes to destroy all states and governments anywhere on the face of the earth which are opposed to the ideology and programme of Islam regardless of the country or the Nation which rules it. The purpose of Islam is to set up a state on the

basis of its own ideology and programme, regardless of which nation assumes the role of the standard-bearer of Islam or the rule of which nation is undermined in the process of the establishment of an ideological Islamic State. Islam requires the earth—not just a portion, but the whole planet—not because the sovereignty over the earth should be wrested from one nation or several nations and vested in one particular nation, but because the entire mankind should benefit from the ideology and welfare programme or what would be truer to say from 'Islam' which is the programme of well-being for all humanity. Towards this end, Islam wishes to press into service all forces which can bring about a revolution and a composite term for the use of all these forces is 'Jihad'. To change the outlook of the people and initiate a mental revolution among them through speech or writing is a form of 'Jihad'. To alter the old tyrannical social system and establish a new just order of life by the power of sword is also 'Jihad' and to expend goods and exert physically for this cause is 'Jihad' too.

'For the Cause of God', the Essential Condition

But the 'Jihad' of Islam is not merely a 'struggle'; it is a 'struggle for the Cause of God'. 'For the Cause of God is an essential condition for 'Jihad' in Islam. This expression is also part of the special terminology of Islam to which I have alluded above. Its literal meaning is 'In the way of God'. It is this translation which misled the people into believing that 'Jihad in the way of God' enjoined forcible conversion of other people to the faith of Islam, for the limited intellects of the people could take the expression 'in the way of God' to mean nothing else than that. But in the terminology of Islam this expression bears wider meaning. All such work as is undertaken for the collective well-being of mankind and in which the functionary has no vested interest in the present world, his sole interest being to win the favour of God, is regarded in Islam as an 'act in the way of God'. To take an instance, if you give away something in charity in anticipation of receiving some material or moral dividend in this world, it

would not be regarded as an 'act in the way of God'. But if it is your desire to win the pleasure of God by affording assistance to a poor man, this charitable act would be deemed to have been done 'in the way of God'. Hence the term 'in the way of God' is reserved for such deeds only as are undertaken with perfect sincerity, without any thought of gaining a selfish end, and executed on the understanding that to afford benefit to other human beings is a means of winning the pleasure of God and the sole purpose of human life is to win the favour of the Creator of the universe. The condition 'in the cause of God' has been attached to 'Jihad' for the same reason. It strictly implies that when a person or a group arises to carry out a revolution in the system of life and to establish a new system in conformity with the ideology of Islam, he or they should keep no selfish motives in mind while offering sacrifices and executing acts of devotion for the Cause. The aim should not be to knock out an Emperor and occupy the vacant throne i.e., to become a Caesar replacing another Caesar. The objectives of the struggle should be completely free from the taint of selfish motives like gaining wealth or goods, fame and applause, personal glory or elevation. All sacrifices and exertions should be directed to achieve the one and the only end i.e., the establishment of a just and equitable social order among human beings; and the only reward in view should be to gain the favour of God.

The Holy Qur'an says:

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ الطَّاغُوْتِ فَقَاتِلُوْٓا اَوْلِيَآءَ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۚ اِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيْفًا ﴿٧٦﴾ (النساء)

'Those who believe fight in the way of God and the unbelievers fight in the way of Tāghūt (Devil)'. *(Nisa4: 76)*

The word Tāghūt is derived from 'Tughian' (the deluge) which bears the meaning 'to cross the limit'. When the river crosses its boundaries we say 'the deluge has come'. Similarly, when man transgresses all lawful bounds and exerts himself to assume the position of the Lord over human beings or to

expropriate more goods than are rightfully his due, this is called as 'fighting in the way of Tāghūt'. In contrast to this 'fighting in the way of God' refers to the struggle for the establishment of God's just order in the world. The fighter's aim is to abide by the law of God himself and enforce it among other human beings.

In connection with this point, the Holy Quran says:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُرِيْدُوْنَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ؕ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾ (القصص)

'We shall confer dignity in the Eternal world upon those who do not seek to establish their might in the world and do not wish to create strife. Success in the world Hereafter awaits those who are God-fearing'. *(Qasas: 83)*

It is reported in the Traditions that an individual enquired from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), "What does 'war in the cause of Allah' imply? A man fights to obtain goods. Another engages in battle to secure a reputation for valour. A third man fights to wreak vengeance upon the other or is impelled to fight for national honour. Who, among these men, is a fighter 'in the way of God" The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) answered: "None. Only he fights in the way of the Lord who holds no other purpose than the glorification of God". Another tradition relates: "If a man engaged in battle entertains in his heart a desire to obtain out of the war only a rope to tie his camel with, his reward shall be forfeited". God accepts only such needs as are executed for the purpose of obtaining His Goodwill and the doers seek to serve no personal or collective objectives. Hence from the standpoint of Islam, the condition 'in the way of God' is of utmost importance in relation to 'Jihad'. Mere striving is done by all living creatures in the world. Everyone is doing his utmost to secure his purpose. But the most important, nay, the fundamental ideal among the revolutionary doctrines of that Revolutionary Party called 'Muslims' is to expend all the powers of body and soul, your life and goods in the fight against the evil forces of the

world, not that having annihilated them you should step into their shoes, but in order that evil and contumacy should be wiped out and God's Law should be enforced in the world. After having briefly elucidated the meaning of Jihad and the significance of the clause 'in the way of God', I wish to explain in brief terms the Revolutionary Creed which Islam upholds so that it may be easily understood why Jihad is needed and what is the objective of Jihad?

The Revolutionary creed of Islam

The Revolutionary Creed of Islam, in a nutshell, is:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ۝ (البقرہ)

'O people! Offer worship to that God alone Who created you'.
(Baqarah2: 21)

The call of Islam is not addressed to the workers, landholders, peasants or industrialists; it is directed to the whole of human race. Islam addresses man in his capacity as human being. If you entertain the conceit that you are a demi-god, dispel it because none of you has the right to demand worship and unconditional submission from fellow human beings. All of you should affirm devotion to one God and in the devotion to the divine; you should all stand on a level of equality.

قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۢ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ اَلَّا نَعْبُدَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهٖ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا اَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُوْلُوا اشْهَدُوْا بِاَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ۝ (آل عمران)

"Come to a word equal between us and you that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for Lords beside Allah. But if they turn away, then say, 'Bear witness that we have submitted to God."
(Ale Imran: 64)

This was the call for a universal and complete revolution. It loudly proclaimed 'Sovereignty belongs to no one except Allah.' No one has the right to become a self-appointed ruler of men and issue orders and prohibitions on his own volition and authority. To acknowledge the personal authority of a human being as the source of commands and prohibitions is tantamount to admitting him as the sharer in the Powers and Authority of God. And this is the root of all evils in the universe. God has instilled the correct spirit in man and has shown him the right way of life. The reason why human beings deviate from this straight path is that they forget God and consequently forget their own real worth. This state of affairs inevitably encourages some persons, dynasties or classes to claim Divine rights for them and taking undue advantage of their might they reduce general humanity to the status of their creatures. On the other hand also, this forgetfulness of God and of self leads a portion of mankind to affirm the Divinity of the Mighty of the World. They acquiesce in the right of the powerful men to issue commands and their own obligation to carry out those commands with servile devotion. This is the root-cause of tyranny, conflict and unlawful exploitation in the world and this is the target upon which Islam directs its first assault. Islam issues a clarion call:

وَلَا تُطِيعُوٓا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾ الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

(الشعراء)

"And obey not the dictate of those who transgress the bounds, who mischief in the earth and promote not order."(Shua'ra: 151-152)

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾ (الكهف)

"And obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, who follows his low desires, and his case exceeds all (legitimate) bounds." (Kahf: 28)

وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ يُعْرَضُوْنَ عَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ وَيَقُوْلُ الْاَشْهَادُ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَبُوْا عَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ ۚ اَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۙ﴿۱۸﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَيَبْغُوْنَهَا عِوَجًا ؕ وَهُمْ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿۱۹﴾ (ہود)

"Certainly Allah's curse is on the wrong-doers who obstruct (mankind) from the path of Allah and seek to make it crooked." *(Hud: 18, 19)*

Islam puts it to the people:

يٰصَاحِبَيِ السِّجْنِ ءَاَرْبَابٌ مُّتَفَرِّقُوْنَ خَيْرٌ اَمِ اللّٰهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿۳۹﴾ (یوسف)

"Are many lords differing among themselves better or Allah, the One, the Almighty." *(Yusuf: 39)*

If you do not offer devotion to the One God, you shall never be free from the bondage of these small and false gods; in one form or another they shall obtain power over you and will inevitably create strife:

قَالَتْ اِنَّ الْمُلُوْكَ اِذَا دَخَلُوْا قَرْيَةً اَفْسَدُوْهَا وَجَعَلُوْٓا اَعِزَّةَ اَهْلِهَآ اَذِلَّةً ۚ وَكَذٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿۳۴﴾ (النمل)

"Verily, the monarchs, when they enter a land, despoil it, and render the highest of its people into the lowest." *(Naml: 34)*

وَقُلْنَا يٰٓاٰدَمُ اسْكُنْ اَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا ۪ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُوْنَا مِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۳۵﴾ (البقرة)

"And when he captures power he creates strife on earth. He spoils the fields and annihilates generations. And God disapproves of strife." *(Baqarah: 35)*

This is not the occasion to go into all the details. I wish to explain to you in brief terms and I want you to note the point that Islam's call for the affirmation of faith in one God and offering devotion to Him alone was not an invitation to follow a creed in the same conventional sense as the call of other religious creeds. In reality, it was an invitation to join a movement of social revolution. Its main brunt fell directly on

those classes who, as divines in the religious sphere, kings, nobles and ruling classes in the political domain and as usurers, landholders and monopolists in the economic field of life, had reduced common humanity to the status of their slaves. At some places they had openly declared themselves to be lords besides Allah. They demanded obedience and devotion from the people as their hereditary rights or privileges based on class distinctions and brazenly declared:

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الْمَلَاُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اِلٰهٍ غَيْرِيْ ۚ فَاَوْقِدْ لِيْ يٰهَامٰنُ عَلَى الطِّيْنِ فَاجْعَلْ لِّيْ صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّيْٓ اَطَّلِعُ اِلٰٓى اِلٰهِ مُوْسٰى ۙ وَاِنِّيْ لَاَظُنُّهٗ مِنَ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾
(القصص)

"Who besides me is the deity of yours?" *(Qasas: 38)*

فَاِذَا جَآءَتِ الطَّآمَّةُ الْكُبْرٰى ﴿٣٤﴾ (النزعات)

and *"I am your highest Lord";* *(Naziat: 34)*

اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْ حَآجَّ اِبْرٰهٖمَ فِيْ رَبِّهٖٓ اَنْ اٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ الْمُلْكَ ۘ اِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِيْ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ۙ قَالَ اَنَا اُحْيٖ وَاُمِيْتُ ۭ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَاْتِيْ بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَاْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِيْ كَفَرَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾ (البقرة)

and *"I give life and cause death";* *(Baqarah: 258)*

قَالَ هٰذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسْتَقِيْمٌ ﴿٤١﴾ (الحجر)

and *"Who is greater in strength than us."* *(Hijr: 41)*

In other places, they had created false gods in the form of idols and temples in order to exploit the ignorance of the common people and taking over behind these idols and temples they hoodwinked mankind to acquiesce in their own divine rights. Hence the call of Islam against heresy, polytheism and idolatry, and invitation to offer worship and devotion to one God only—all this came into direct conflict with the interests of the Government and of the classes which either supported its

authority or drew support from it. It was because of this that whenever a prophet (peace be on him) proclaimed:

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ إِنِّي أَرَاكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ مُحِيطٍ ﴿٨٤﴾ (هود)

"O people, obey Allah; none is your deity except God";

(Hud: 84)

The Government of the day hastened to bar his way with all its might and main and the degenerate exploiting classes opposed him tooth and nail, for the call of the Prophet was never a metaphysical proposition; it was a charter of social revolution. Hence the ruling and exploiting classes smelt the menace of a political upheaval in the very first pronouncement of a prophet (peace be on him).

The Characteristic Feature of the Revolutionary Creed of Islam

There is no doubt that all the Prophets of God (peace be on them) without exception were Revolutionary Leaders, and the illustrious Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the greatest Revolutionary Leader. But the point at which a clear line of demarcation can be drawn between these God-worshipping Revolutionary Leaders and the general run of worldly revolutionaries is that these worldly revolutionaries, however, honest their intentions may be can never attain to a correct level of justice and moderation. The revolutionaries of the world either rise from oppressed classes themselves or stand for upholding the rights of the oppressed. They, therefore, look at all matters from the standpoint of these classes alone the natural result is that their viewpoint is never impartial and purely humane. On the contrary their outlook is heavily biased in favour of one class and bears hatred and resentment for the other class. They prescribe a remedy for tyranny which is itself tyrannical and is revengeful in effect. It

is not possible for them to shake off feelings of vendetta, jealousy and ill-will and plan an equitable and balanced social order which ensures the wellbeing of all persons. In striking contrast to this, whatever the severity of persecution to which the Prophets (peace be on them) were subjected, whatever the agonies they and their companions had to suffer at the hands of the oppressors, the Prophets (peace be on them) did not allow their personal feelings to influence the course of their revolutionary movements. They acted under direct Guidance of their Lord. Since the Lord is above all human passions and He has no special connection with any human group or class, nor does He entertain any grudge or feelings of animosity against any other class of human beings, so under His direct guidance the Prophets (peace be on them) viewed all matters with impartial justice in order to discover ways for securing collective well-being. They strove to devise a system in which each individual might feel content to remain within the limits of his rights, in which every man might fully enjoy his lawful rights and secure a perfect balance in the relationship between man and man and man and society. For this reason, the Revolutionary Movements launched by the Prophets (peace be on them) never assumed the character of class war They did not affect social reconstruction so as to secure the dominance of one class over the other but establish a just pattern of society which afforded equal opportunities to all human beings for self-improvement and for obtaining material and spiritual excellence.

The Need and Objective of Jihad

It is an uphill task to describe in this brief treatise the details of the social order envisaged by Islam. I hope an occasion to do so will shortly present itself. Here, confining myself within the limits of the subject, the only point which I wish to elucidate is this: Islam is not merely a religious creed or compound name for a few forms of worship, but a comprehensive system which envisages to annihilate all tyrannical and evil systems in the world and enforces its own

programme of reform which it deems best for the well-being of mankind. Islam addresses its call for affecting this programme of destruction and reconstruction, revolution and reform not just to one nation or a group of people, but to all humanity. Islam itself calls upon all the classes which oppress and exploit the people unlawfully, its call is addressed even to the kings and the noblemen to affirm faith in Islam and bind themselves to remain within the lawful limits enjoined upon them by their Lord. Islam impresses upon them that if they accept this just and righteous system, they will gain peace and salvation. This system harbours no animosity against any human being. Our animosity is directed against tyranny, strife, immorality and against the attempt of an individual to transgress his natural limits and expropriate what is not apportioned to him by the natural law of God. Those who affirm faith in this ideology become members of the party of Islam and enjoy equal status and equal rights without distinction of class, race, nation or the country to which they belong. In this manner, an International Revolutionary Party is born to which Qur'an gives the title of 'Hizb Allah' and which alternatively is known as Islamic Party or the Ummah of Islam'. As soon as this party is formed, it launches the struggle to obtain the purpose for which it exists. The rationale for its existence is that it should endeavour to destroy the hegemony of an un-Islamic system and establish in its place the rule of that social and cultural order which regulates life with balanced and humane laws, referred to by the Qur'an with the comprehensive term 'the word of God'. If this party does not strive to effect a change in the government and establish the Islamic system of government, the very basis on which this party exists is knocked out, for this party comes into existence to secure no other purpose than the above and there is no use for this party save that it should struggle for the cause of God.

The Holy Qur'an enunciates only one purpose of the genesis of this party and that is:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَلَوْ اٰمَنَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَ اَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿١١٠﴾ (آل عمران)

"You are the best people, raised for mankind, exhorting good and warding off evil and believing in Allah." (Ale Imran: 110)

These men who propagate religion are not mere preachers or missionaries, but the functionaries of God, (so that they may be witnesses for the people), and it is their duty to wipe out oppression, mischief, strife, immorality, high handedness and unlawful exploitation from the world by force of arms. It is their objective to shatter the myth of the divinity of demi-gods and false deities and reinstate good in place of evil.

وَقٰتِلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى لَا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ وَّيَكُوْنَ الدِّيْنُ لِلّٰهِ فَاِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ اِلَّا عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٩٣﴾ (البقرة)

(1) *"And fight them until there is no persecution and religion is professed for Allah." (Al Baqarah: 193)*

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ اِلَّا تَفْعَلُوْهُ تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيْرٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ (الانفال)

(2) *"If you do not do (that you are enjoined) there will be mischief in the earth and tremendous disorder."(Al Anfal: 73)*

هُوَ الَّذِىْٓ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰى وَدِيْنِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَى الدِّيْنِ كُلِّهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾ (التوبہ)

(3) *"He is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, he may make it dominant over all religions, even if the polytheists resent it." (At Tauba: 33)*

Hence this party is left with no other choice except to capture State Authority, for an evil system takes root and flourishes under the patronage of an evil government and a pious cultural order can never be established until the authority of Government is wrested from the wicked and transferred into

the hands of the reformers. Apart from reforming the world, it becomes impossible for the party itself to act upon its own ideals under an alien state system. No party which believes in the validity and righteousness of its own ideology can live according to its precepts under the rule of a system different from its own. A man who believes in communism cannot order his life on the principles of communism while in England or America, for the capitalistic state system will bear down on him with all its power and it will be quite impossible for him to escape the retribution of the ruling authority. Likewise, it is impossible for a Muslim to succeed in his intention of observing the Islamic pattern of life under the authority of a non-Islamic system of government. All rules which he considers wrong; all taxes that he deems unlawful; all matters which he believes to be evil; the civilization and way of life which, in his view, are wicked; the education system which seems to him as fatal—all these will be so inexorably imposed on him, his home and his children that evasion will become impossible. Hence a person or a group of persons are compelled by the innate demand of their faith to strive for the extirpation of the rule of an opposing ideology and setting up a government which follows the programme and policies of their own faith, for under the authority of a government professing inimical doctrines, that person or group of persons cannot act upon their own belief. If these people evade their duty of actively striving for this end, it clearly implies that they are hypocrites and liars in their faith.

عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْكَ ۚ لِمَ اَذِنْتَ لَهُمْ حَتّٰى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾ لَا يَسْتَاْذِنُكَ الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ اَنْ يُّجَاهِدُوْا بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾ اِنَّمَا يَسْتَاْذِنُكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيْ رَيْبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾ (التوبہ)

"May Allah forgive you (O Muhammad) Why didst you permitted them (to remain behind) till had become manifest to you those who were truthful and who were liars. Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, will not seek permission (for

exemption) from striving with their riches and their lives. And Allah knows the righteous Only those will seek permission from you (to be exempted) who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day and whose hearts are full of doubts and in their doubts they waver." *(At Tauba: 43-45)*

In these words, the Qur'an has given a clear and definite decree that the acid test of the true devotion of a party to its convictions is whether or not it expends all its resources of wealth and life in the struggle for installing its faith as the ruling power in the State. If you suffer the authority of an inimical doctrine in the State, it is a proof positive that your faith is false and the natural result of this is, and can only be this, that your nominal devotion to the doctrine of Islam will also finally wear off. To begin with, you will endure the rule of an inimical system with disdain. Gradually, however, you will learn to live with it until your contempt will change into a liking for this rule. Finally, it will come to such a pass that you will serve as a pillar of support for the establishment and maintenance of the State rule of an opposing ideology. You will then expend your wealth and life in the struggle for the installation and upholding the un-Islamic doctrines in place of the ideology of Islam. Your own resources will be utilised in resisting the establishment of Islamic ideology as ruling power in the State. At this stage, no other difference except hypocritical professions of devotion to Islam, an abominable falsehood and a deceitful title will distinguish you from the infidels. The Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) has clearly explained this fact in the Traditions: "I swear by God Who has Power over my life, you shall have to enforce good and curb evil and arrest the hand of the evil-doer and turn it by force to do right or the inevitable consequences of the natural law of God will be manifested in this fashion that the intentions of the hearts of the evil-doers will influence your hearts and like them you shall also be damned."

(Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi)

A World Revolution

It must be evident to you from this discussion that the objective of the Islamic 'Jihad' is to eliminate the rule of an un-Islamic system and establish in its stead an Islamic system of state rule. Islam does not intend to confine this revolution to a single state or a few countries; the aim of Islam is to bring about a universal revolution. Although in the initial stages it is incumbent upon members of the party of Islam to carry out a revolution in the State system of the countries to which they belong, but their ultimate objective is no other than to effect a world revolution. No revolutionary ideology which champions the principles of the welfare of humanity as a whole instead of upholding national interests, can restrict its aims and objectives to the limits of a country or a nation. The goal of such an all-embracing doctrine is naturally bound to be world revolution. Truth cannot be confined within geographical borders. Truth demands that whatever is right on this side of the river or the mountain is also right on the other side of the river or mountain; no portion of mankind should be deprived of the Truth; wherever mankind is being subjected to repression, discrimination and exploitation, it is the duty of the righteous to go to their succour. The same conception has been enunciated by the Holy Qur'an in the following words:

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَ النِّسَآءِ وَ الْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ اَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ اَهْلُهَا ۚ وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ۚ وَّاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ نَصِيْرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ (النساء)

"What has happened to you? Why don't you fight in the way of God in support of men, women and children, whom finding helpless, they have repressed; and who pray,"O God! liberate us from this habitation which is ruled by tyrants." (Al Nisa: 75)

Moreover, notwithstanding the national or country-wise divisions of mankind, human relations and connections have a universal significance so that no state can put her ideology into full operation until the same ideology comes into force in the neighbouring states. Hence it is imperative for the Muslim

Party for reasons of both general welfare of humanity and self-defence that it should not rest content with establishing the Islamic System of Government in one territory alone, but to extend the sway of Islamic System all around as far as its resources can carry it. The Muslim Party will inevitably extend invitation to the citizens of other countries to embrace the faith which holds promise of true salvation and genuine welfare for them. Even otherwise also if the Muslim Party commands adequate resources it will eliminate un-Islamic Governments and establish the power of Islamic Government in their stead. It is the same policy which was executed by the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) and his successor illustrious caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them). Arabia, where the Muslim Party was founded, was the first country which was subjugated and brought under the rule of Islam. Later the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) sent invitations to other surrounding states to accept the faith and ideology of Islam. When the ruling classes of those countries declined to accept this invitation to adopt the true faith, the Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) resolved to take military action against them. The war of Tabuk was the first in the series of military actions. When Hadrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) assumed leadership of the Muslim Party after the Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) had left for his heavenly abode, he launched an invasion of Rome and Iran, which was under the dominance of un-Islamic Governments. Later, Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) carried the war to a victorious end. The citizens of Egypt, Syria, Rome and Iran initially took these military actions as evidence of the imperialist policy of the Arab nation. They believed that, like other nations, this nation had also set out on a course of enslaving other nations under the yoke of imperialism. It was owing to this misconception that they advanced under the banners of Caesar and Khosros to give battle to the Muslims. But when they discovered the revolutionary ideology of the Muslim Party; when it dawned on them that Muslim armies were not the champions of aggressive nationalism that they had

no nationalistic objectives; that they had come with the sole object of instituting a just system; that their real purpose was to annihilate the tyrannical classes which had assumed divine powers and were trampling down their subjects under the patronage of despotic Caesars, kings, the moral sympathies of those downtrodden people turned towards the party of Islam. They began to forsake their allegiance to the flags of their own monarchs and when they were conscripted by force and driven to fight against the Muslims, they had no heart in the fight. This is the main cause of those astounding victories won by the Muslims in the early period. It is on this account also that after the establishment of Islamic governments in their countries when they saw the social system of Islam in action, they willingly joined this international party and became the upholders of its ideology and set out to other countries to spread its message.

The Terms "Offensive" and "Defensive" are Irrelevant

If you carefully consider the explanation given above you will readily understand that the two terms 'offensive' and 'defensive' by which the nature of welfare is differentiated are not at all applicable to Islamic 'Jihad'. These terms are relevant only in the context of wars between nations and countries, for technically the terms 'attack' and 'defence' can only be used with reference to a country or a nation. But when an international party rises with a universal faith and ideology and invites all peoples as human beings to embrace this faith and ideology and admits into its fold as equal members men of all nationalities and strives only to dismantle the rule of an opposing ideology and set up in its place a system of government based on its own ideology, then in this case the use of the technical terms like 'offence' and 'defence' is not germane. Even if we stop thinking about these technical terms, the division of Islamic 'Jihad' into offensive and defensive is not admissible. Islamic Jihad is both offensive and defensive at one and the same time. It is offensive because the Muslim Party assaults the rule of an opposing ideology and it is

defensive because the Muslim Party is constrained to capture state power in order to arrest the principles of Islam in space-time forces. As a party, it has no home to defend; it upholds certain principles which it must protect. Similarly this party does not attack the home of the opposing party, but launches an assault on the principles of the opponent. The objective of this attack, moreover, is not to coerce the opponent to relinquish his principles but to abolish the government which sustains these principles.

The Status of the Dhimmis (Unbelievers under the Protection of an Islamic Government)

This also answers the question relating to the status of the votaries of other faiths and ideologies when an Islamic government has been set up in their countries. Islamic 'Jihad' does not seek to interfere with the faith, ideology, rituals of worship or social customs of the people. It allows them perfect freedom of religious belief and permits them to act according to their creed. However, Islamic 'Jihad' does not recognize their right to administer state affairs according to a system which, in the view of Islam, is evil. Furthermore, Islamic 'Jihad' also refuses to admit their right to continue with such practices under an Islamic government which fatally affect the public interest from the viewpoint of Islam. For instance, as soon as the Ummah of Islam captures state power it will ban all forms of business prosecuted on the basis of usury or interest; it will not permit the practice of gambling; it will curb all forms of business and financial dealings which are forbidden by Islamic law; it will close down all dens of prostitution and other vices and for all; it will make it obligatory for non-Muslim women to observe the minimum standards of modesty in dress as required by Islamic law and will forbid them to go about displaying their beauty like the days of ignorance; the Muslim Party will clamp censorship on the Cinema. The Islamic government with a view to securing general welfare of the public and for reasons of self-defence will not permit such cultural activities as may be permissible in non-Muslim creeds,

but which, from the viewpoint of Islam are corrosive of moral fibres and fatal. In this connection, if a man feels inclined to level charges of intolerance at Islam, he should consider that no creed in the world has shown more tolerance to the votaries of other faiths as has been practised by Islam. In other places, protagonists of another faith are so repressed that finding existence unbearable they are constrained to emigrate from their homes. But Islam provides full opportunity for self-advancement to the people of other faiths under conditions of peace and tranquillity and displays such magnanimity towards them that the world has yet to show a parallel example.

The Charge of Imperialism

At this point, I must reiterate that Islam regards only that war as 'Jihad' which is fought in the service of Allah—a war to fulfil the Will of God. When an Islamic government is founded at the conclusion of this war, the Muslims are categorically barred from assuming the despotic powers which the old despots wielded upon the people. A Muslim does not fight and as a Muslim he must not fight to establish a personal rule and to turn the people of God into his own creatures and to build a Paradise on earth for himself by expropriating the hard-earned wealth of the people. This is not a war to fulfil the Will of God, but a war to fulfil the will of devil; and Islam has no use for such a government. The 'Jihad' of Islam is a dry labour, devoid of pleasure. It is nothing but a sacrifice of life, wealth and carnal desires. When this 'Jihad' is crowned with victory and an Islamic government is instituted, the responsibilities of an honest and truly Muslim head of State are so onerous that sleep during the night and ease during the day time both are denied to him. But as a reward for these titanic labours he is not entitled to indulge in pleasures which power and authority may call for and for the sake of which bids are usually made in the world for securing governments. A Muslim ruler is not a superior being, distinct from or any more privileged than the common man; he cannot sit on the throne of Exaltedness or Highness; he cannot command any one to prostrate before him;

he cannot execute the slightest move without the sanction of Islamic law; he has no power to shield any of his relatives, friends or himself against the lawful claim of the most ordinary man in the community; he cannot take even the most insignificant thing or even an inch of land from anyone else without justification and he is forbidden by law to draw half a penny more from the public exchequer as his salary than is necessary for a Muslim of average means to subsist. This God-conscious head of state cannot occupy a magnificent palace, nor can he live with pomp and glory nor can he procure means of pleasure and merriment. At all hours, he is seized with the fear that one day he will be severely called to account for every deed he commits in this world and if it is found that he received a single penny as illicit gains, or snatched away the smallest patch of land from any one by force, or displayed the slightest measure of pride or haughtiness, or practised tyranny or injustice in a single instance or succumbed even for one moment before carnal pleasures, he would be condemned to endure the most dreadful torture. The world has not seen a greater fool than the man who truly loves to gain the world and yet is willing to carry the burden of state responsibility under Islamic law. The worldly position of a small shopkeeper is far better than the ruler of an Islamic State. He earns more during the day than the Caliph does and enjoys a sound sleep at night. The Caliph neither earns as much as he, nor enjoys peace during the night. This is the cardinal difference between the Islamic and un-Islamic system of government. In an un-Islamic State, the ruling classes establish themselves as divine powers and exploit the means and resources of the country to their personal aggrandizement. In striking contrast to this, the governing class in an Islamic State serves without any thought of personal motives, and secures no greater personal advantage for it than is readily available to the common man. Compare the scale of salaries granted to civil service cadres under the government of Islam with the incomes received on account of salaries by civil servants under modern imperialist governments or imperialist powers which were contemporary

of the Islamic State, you will soon discover that there is an immeasurably vast difference both in spirit and nature of the worldly conquests of Islam and the world-wide dominance of imperialism. In the Islamic State, the governors of Khurasan, Iraq, Syria and Egypt were paid a lesser amount of money as salary than is drawn by a low-grade Inspector today. The first Caliph Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) ran the administration of such a vast empire on a salary of Rs. 100/- per month. Hadrat 'Umar's (may Allah pleased with him) emoluments did not exceed Rs. 150/-per month, notwithstanding the fact that the coffers of the Islamic State were full with the wealth of the two empires of the known world. Although seemingly, imperialism conquers countries and so does Islam, yet between the two there is an elemental difference which is equal to the space between heaven and earth. Verse: "Both fly in space, yet the world of the Eagle is far removed from the Crow's". This, then, is the true meaning of 'Jihad', a term about which you have heard much. If you ask me now where is that Islam, the Muslim Party and the 'Jihad' whose ideology you have enunciated before us and why no trace of these may be discovered today among the Muslims of the world, I shall entreat you not to confront me with this question but ask it of those who have deflected the attention of the Muslims from their real mission to magical preparations like talismans, incantations, superstitious rites and supererogatory offerings. Ask it of those who prescribed short-cuts to salvation, reform and the attainment of the objective, so that all this may be obtained by no more striving or hard labour than is necessary for telling the beads or propitiating a soul lying asleep in a grave. Ask it of those who wrapped up the tenets, ideology and objectives of Islam and consigned them to the dark corners and engaged the Muslim mind in the polemics over the most insignificant things of Divine Faith or visits to the tombs or such other minor issues with the consequence that the Muslim people lost all sense of their true identity, the objective of their creation and the real character of Islam? If they fail to deliver a satisfactory answer, then put this question

to the wealthy, the officials and the ruling authorities who profess faith in Qur'an and the divine ministry of the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him), but believe that they owe to the Qur'anic injunctions and the guidance of the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) nothing more than holding assemblies for the recitations of the Qur'an from corner to corner and calling meetings to celebrate the birth of the Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) or sometimes praising God for the beauty of His verse (may God forgive them and us!). With regard to the enforcement of the Islamic law and the introduction of Islamic reforms in practical polity, these gentlemen deem themselves utterly free from any responsibility. For, as a matter of fact, the soul of these gentlemen is unprepared to accept the restraints and sustain the burden of duty imposed by Islam. They are suitors of a very easy salvation.

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Witness unto Mankind

Witness unto Mankind

Praise and Salutations

All praise be to God who alone is the Creator, Master and Sovereign of the universe. It is He who rules over it with perfect wisdom, absolute power and infinite mercy. He who has created man, endowed him with knowledge and reason, made him His vicegerent on earth, and has sent His Books and Messengers to guide him. May God bless all those righteous and noble servants of His who were appointed to teach man how to live as true human beings and who made man aware of the real purpose of his life, and showed him the right way to live in this world. Whatever measure of true guidance, morality, piety, and selflessness that the world possesses today, it owes to the teachings of these servants of God, peace be upon them. This is a debt that can never be sufficiently repaid.

Our Message

Brothers and friends, we usually divide our meetings into two parts. In one part, we review, among ourselves, our activities and discuss plans for their advancement. The other part we devote to conveying our message to the people of the area where we hold our meeting. We have, thus, asked you to join us in this meeting so that we may explain our message to you. On the one hand our message is addressed to Muslims, and on the other hand to all those human beings who are outside the fold of Islam. It is unfortunate, however, that I do not see here today people belonging to the second category. Our past mistakes and present errors are responsible for alienating a great many people from us. Therefore, we hardly ever find the opportunity either to draw them near to us or draw near to them, so that we may communicate to them the message sent by God, in whom we all believe, through His Messengers for the guidance of us all. Since we do not have

any non-Muslims present amongst us, I shall only concentrate upon that part of our message which is meant for Muslims.

THE PURPOSE AND DUTY OF THE MUSLIM UMMAH

Responsibilities and Duties

To the Muslims we have only one very simple thing to say: Understand and fulfil the responsibilities and duties that fall upon you by virtue of your being Muslims. You cannot get away with merely affirming that you are Muslims and that you have accepted God as your only God and Islam as your religion. Rather, as soon as you acknowledge Allah as your only Lord and His guidance as your way of life, you take upon yourselves certain obligations and duties. These obligations you must always remain conscious of, these duties you must always endeavour to discharge. If you evade them, you shall not escape the evil consequences of your conduct in this world or in the Hereafter.

What are these duties? They are not merely confined to the affirmation of faith in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Day of Judgement. Nor are they confined to performing the Prayers, observing the Fasts, going on the Pilgrimage, and paying the Alms. Nor are these duties exhausted by observing the injunctions of Islam relating to marriage, divorce and inheritance. Over and above all these duties, there is one which is the most important: that your lives bear witness to the Truth that you have been given by God before all mankind, the Truth which you believe to be true.

The Only Purpose of Existence

The Qur'an clearly states that witnessing to the Truth in a manner that would leave mankind with no justifiable ground to deny it is the only purpose behind constituting you as a distinct Ummah (community), named Muslims.

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنٰكُمْ اُمَّةً وَّسَطًا لِّتَكُوْنُوْا شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُوْنَ الرَّسُوْلُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيْدًا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِيْ كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَآ اِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَّتَّبِعُ الرَّسُوْلَ مِمَّنْ يَّنْقَلِبُ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِ ۗ وَاِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيْرَةً اِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ هَدَى اللّٰهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُضِيْعَ اِيْمَانَكُمْ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝ (البقرة)

"And thus We have made you a community of the middle way, so that you may be witnesses [to the Truth] before all mankind, and the Messenger may be witness [to it] before you."
(al-Baqarah 2: 143)

This mission is the sole objective for which your Ummah has been brought into being, it is the raison d'etre of its existence as a society of human beings. Unless you fulfil it you are squandering your life. For this is no ordinary duty; it is a duty enjoined on you by God. It is a Divine command and a Divine call:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُوْنُوْا قَوّٰمِيْنَ لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَآءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۗ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلٰٓى اَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا ۗ اِعْدِلُوْا ۗ هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌ ۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝ (المائدة)

"O believers, be ever steadfast in standing up, for the sake of God, bearing witness to justice." *(al-Ma'idah 5: 8)*

It is not a mere trifle but an emphatic and grave mandate, for Allah also says:

اَمْ تَقُوْلُوْنَ اِنَّ اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطَ كَانُوْا هُوْدًا اَوْ نَصٰرٰى ۗ قُلْ ءَاَنْتُمْ اَعْلَمُ اَمِ اللّٰهُ ۗ وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهٗ مِنَ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝ (البقرة)

"And who is a greater wrong-doer than he who suppresses a witness entrusted to him by God." *(al-Baqarah 2: 140)*

You have been warned of the consequences of evading this duty. Look at the history of the people of Israel. They too were appointed to stand in the witness-box; but sometimes they

suppressed the Truth, and sometimes they witnessed against it. By their conduct, they, in fact, became witnesses to falsehood rather than witnesses to the Truth. The consequence was that God forsook them and a curse fell upon them.

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يٰمُوسٰى لَنْ نَّصْبِرَ عَلٰى طَعَامٍ وَّاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْۢبِتُ الْاَرْضُ مِنْۢ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّآئِهَا وَفُوْمِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا ۭ قَالَ اَتَسْتَبْدِلُوْنَ الَّذِيْ هُوَ اَدْنٰى بِالَّذِيْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ۭ اِهْبِطُوْا مِصْرًا فَاِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَاَلْتُمْ ۭ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ ۤ وَبَآءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾ (البقرة)

"And so, humiliation and powerlessness afflicted them, and they earned God's anger." *(al-Baqarah 2: 61)*

Witness to the Truth

What does this duty of witness imply? Consider it carefully: You have been given Divine guidance, you have been shown the Truth. You must, therefore, establish by your testimony and witness its authenticity and truthfulness before all mankind. This is a testimony that will make the authenticity and truthfulness of Divine guidance self-evident, for all to see, and a witness that will make it clear and indisputable for all people.

For this very purpose all the Messengers were sent to the world; this was their primary duty. After them, their followers were entrusted with the same duty. And now the Muslim Ummah, as the successor to the Last Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, is charged with this very mission, just as he was charged with it during his lifetime.

Nature and Importance

What is the importance of this witness? You will know its importance only when you understand that man has been made

accountable for his conduct and will be rewarded and punished in the Hereafter under the Divine Law which rests entirely on this witness. God is All-Wise, All-Merciful, and All-Just. His mercy, justice and wisdom are not such that He should punish people for living against His will while they had no knowledge of it, that He should take people to task for deviating from the right path of which they were ignorant, that He should hold people accountable for things of which they were unaware. It was as a provision against this that the first man He created was a Messenger, and that after him many more were sent from time to time. They were all to be witnesses to mankind, to make it understand and remember the will of God. They were all to teach human beings the proper way of conducting their lives, the code of behaviour that they should adopt to win God's favour, the acts that they should perform, the acts that they should avoid, and the things for which they will be brought to account.

This witness was given by Allah's Messengers so that the people may not be in a position to say to God: How can we be punished for things of which we were not warned? The Qur'an says:

رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِيْنَ وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ لِئَلَّا يَكُوْنَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللّٰهِ حُجَّةٌۢ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيْزًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾ (النساء)

"[We sent] all Messengers as heralds of glad tidings and as warners, so that men may not have any argument against God, after [the coming of] these Messengers; God is indeed All-mighty, All-wise." *(al-Nisa' 4: 165)*

In this manner God made His Messengers bear the crucial responsibility for guiding man on His behalf. They were thus charged with a very delicate and grave responsibility: if they bore witness to the Truth properly, the people would be accountable for their own actions, but if they failed in their duty, they themselves would be called to account for their people going astray. In other words, unless the Messengers made people responsible for their

conduct by giving them conclusive and indisputable testimony to the Truth, the people would hold the Messengers responsible for their own misdeeds, saying: 'The knowledge that God gave you, that you did not communicate to us; the way of life that He showed you, that you did not show us.' That is why all the Messengers always remained acutely conscious of the burden of this responsibility, and that is why they endeavoured so hard to bear witness before the people to the Truth entrusted to them.

Responsibility of the Ummah

All those who were led by the Messengers to the knowledge of the Truth and Divine guidance were formed into a community, an Ummah. Every Ummah was charged with the same mission as the Messengers of witnessing to the Truth. As successors to the Messengers, every Ummah has the same crucial role and responsibility as they had. Thus, if an Ummah properly fulfils its duty of witnessing to the Truth and yet the people do not pay heed, it will be rewarded and the people will be brought to account. However, if the Ummah neglects its duty, or if it gives false witness, it will deserve to be punished more severely than the people. The Ummah shall be accountable not only for its own misdeeds, but also for the misdeeds of those who went astray or turned to error and wickedness because the testimony given to them by the Ummah was misleading or false. This, brothers, is the nature and logic of that grave and crucial duty which lies upon me, you and all those who consider themselves part of the Muslim Ummah, or those who have become sufficiently aware of God's Book and the guidance brought by His Messengers.

3. HOW SHOULD WE WITNESS TO THE TRUTH?

Let us now see in what manner we should discharge our duty of witnessing to the Truth. Witnessing is of two types:

one, witness by words, or the word-witness; the other, witness by acts and deeds, or the act-witness.

Word-witness

In what way should our words witness to the Truth? Through our speech and writing, we should proclaim and explain to the world the guidance that has come to us through God's Messengers. This, in sum, is the word-witness. Employing all possible methods of education, using all possible means of communication and propagation, mastering all knowledge provided by the contemporary arts and sciences, we should inform mankind of the way of life that God has laid down for man. The guidance that Islam gives to humanity in thought and belief, in morality and behaviour, in culture and civilization, in economics and business, in jurisprudence and judiciary, in politics and civil administration that is, in all aspects of inter-human relations we should clearly and fully expound before mankind. By rational discourse and convincing evidence, we should establish its truth and soundness. By soundly reasoned critique, we should rebut all that is contrary to the guidance given by God. The task is enormous. Full justice cannot be done to it unless the thought of guiding man to the right path seizes the whole Ummah as completely as it did each Messenger personally. It is essential, too, that this task should become the central objective of all our collective endeavours, that we should commit all our hearts and minds, all of our resources, to this cause. Uppermost in all our actions should be this objective. Under no circumstances should we allow any voice within ourselves to bear witness against the Truth and Divine guidance that we have.

Act-witness

In what way should our acts and deeds witness to the Truth? For this purpose, the guidance that we hold to be true we must put into practice. Our actions should demonstrate the principles we profess to believe in. Put simply: let our lives

speak the truth, and let the world hear it not merely from our lips but also from our deeds; let mankind witness all the blessings that the Divine guidance brings to human life. Let the world taste in our conduct, individual and collective, that sweetness and flavour which only the faith in One God can impart to character and morality. Let the world see what fine examples of humanity are fashioned by Islam, what a just society is established, what a sound social order emerges, what a clean and noble civilization arises, how science, literature, and art flourish and develop on sound lines, what a just economy compassionate and free from conflict is brought about. Indeed, how every aspect of life is set right, developed and enriched. We shall not be doing our duty to this task unless our lives, individual and collective, become a living embodiment of Islam: unless our personal characters are a living proof of its truth, our homes are fragrant with its teachings, our businesses and factories are illuminated by its rules and laws, our schools and institutions are shaped by its ideas and norms, and our literature and media reflect its principles. Indeed until our entire national policy and public life make its truth manifest and self-evident. In short, wherever and whenever any individual or people come in contact with us it is our duty to convince them, by our example, that the principles and teachings which Islam proclaims to be true are indeed true, and that they do improve the quality of human life and raise it to better and higher levels.

The Islamic State

Finally, I should state one more important thing. This witness of ours would not be complete unless we establish a state based on the principles and teachings of Islam. By translating its ideals and practices, its norms and values, its rules and laws, into public policies and programmes, such a state would demonstrate how the Divine guidance leads to equity and justice, reform and upliftment, caring and efficient administration, social welfare, peace and order, high standards of morality in public servants, virtue and righteousness in

internal policies, honesty in foreign policies, civilized conduct in war, integrity and loyalty in peace. Such public conduct would be a living testimony for all mankind that Islam is indeed the true guarantor of human well-being, that only following its tenets can ensure the good of mankind. Only when the Truth is witnessed in this manner, by both words and actions, will the crucial responsibility laid upon the Muslim Ummah be fully discharged. Only then will no ground remain for mankind to deny or turn away from the Divine guidance. Only then, in the Hereafter, will the Muslim Ummah be in a position to take the witness-stand after the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, and declare that: Whatever truth and guidance we were given by this Prophet, that we conveyed to mankind; those who did not follow it are themselves to blame for going astray, not us. This is the real meaning and scope of the witness that we as Muslims ought to have been giving to the world, both by our words and our deeds. But now let us turn to the actual state of affairs and examine the witness that we in fact are giving in favour of the Divine guidance.

4. WHERE DO WE STAND?

Our Word -Witness

First, look at the testimony that is being given by our word-witness. There are few people amongst us who are using their tongues and pens to witness to the truth of Islam. Still fewer in number are those who are doing so in an appropriate and adequate manner. Otherwise, in almost every respect Muslims, on the whole, are giving their witness against Islam and not in its favour as they should.

What is the witness of our landlords? That the Islamic law of inheritance is wrong and that the customs which came down from the pre-Islamic days are correct. What is the witness of our lawyers and judges? That all the laws of Islam are bad laws, and that their very basis the sovereignty of God is unacceptable. They tell us that only the man-made laws, which have come to us through the British, are good laws. What is the

witness of our teachers and educational institutions? That in philosophy and science, history and sociology, economics and politics, law and ethics, the only true and valid knowledge and thought is that derived from the Western secular world-view. That in all these disciplines the Islamic approach is not even worthy of consideration. What is the witness of our writers? That their literature has the same message to impart as that of the godless writers of the secular West. They demonstrate that as Muslims they have no distinctive literary approach of their own. What is the witness of our press and media? That the only issues and debates that they consider important and which preoccupy them, and the only methods and standards of communication that they consider fit to employ, are those which bear the hallmark of the non-Muslim media. What is the witness of our businessmen and industrialists? That the rules laid down by Islam for economic transactions are impracticable, that business can be conducted only by the methods devised by unbelievers. What is the witness of our leaders and rulers? That they have the same slogans of nationalism and motherland to mobilize people, the same goals to pursue on national levels, the same methods of solving national problems, the same principles of politics and constitution-making as are practised by unbelievers. They declare that Islam has no guidance to offer in this respect. And what is the witness of our masses? They testify that they have nothing to speak about except worldly matters that they have no such religion which desires to be propagated or which demands that they spend part of their time for this purpose. This, then, is the state of witness being given by our whole Ummah by means of its words. This is the case not only in this country but throughout the whole world.

Our Act -Witness

Now let us turn to our act-witness and look at the witness being given by our actions and deeds. Here our conduct is even more scandalous than that in respect of our witness by words. No doubt there are a few good Muslims whose lives are a true

example of Islam. But consider how the overwhelming majority of the Ummah, the society at large, is conducting itself. What is the witness being given by the life of a typical, ordinary Muslim? That the persons shaped and moulded by Islam are in no way better than, or different from, those prepared by Kufr. If anything, the former are worse than the latter: for instance, it is more likely that a Muslim would speak a lie, that he would betray and breach a trust placed in him, that he would oppress people and do wrong to them, that he would abandon his promise, that he would steal and rob, that he would engage himself in disorderly and violent conduct, that he would indulge in all sorts of indecent acts. Indeed, in respect of all these immoral actions the level of Muslim 'performance' is no less than that of any Kafir people. What is the witness of our social life? Look at our life-styles, our customs and ceremonies, our festivities, our fairs and religious gatherings, our meetings and processions: in no aspect do we truly represent Islam. Indeed, on the contrary, our social life is a pathetic testimony that the followers of Islam consider the un-Islamic ways to be better and preferable than the Islamic.

Similar is the testimony of our other social institutions and collective pursuits. When we set up educational institutions, we import everything from Kafirs, our knowledge, our educational system, our philosophy, our spirit and objective. When we form parties and associations, we model everything on the patterns set by Kafirs our ideals and goals, our structures and constitutions, our policies and methods. When we, as a people, launch a struggle, our cause, our slogans and demands, our issues and debates, our programmes and procedures, our resolutions, statements, and speeches, are all true replicas of the practices of Kafir communities and nations.

Things have come to such a pass that even our independent states, where they exist, have borrowed their constitutions, their codes of law, and their guiding policies and principles from Kafirs. In some states, the Islamic law has been reduced to a mere personal law; in some others even this

personal law has been altered. An English writer tauntingly remarks:

In view of the many charges levelled by Indians at the British administration, it is important to realize that the British were extraordinarily slow to introduce any innovations in the law . . . [Indeed] as far as Islam is concerned the result of the British connexion with India has been to establish on a firmer basis the Muslim personal and religious law . . . while all the rest of the Shari'a has been abolished . . . On the other hand Albania and Turkey have both become secular states [adopting European penal and civil codes, even altering Muslim penal law] . . . [Thus, it can be said, as Lindsay says, that]

'The Muslim doctrine that legislation is not within the competence of an earthly sovereign was never, indeed, anything more than a pious fiction . . .' This, then, is the witness being given by the actions of almost all Muslims. This witness, too, goes against Islam. It is not in its favour. Whatever lip-service we might pay to Islam, our public conduct proves that there is no aspect of Islam that we approve of, that we do not consider its laws to be good and conducive to our well-being.

5. AND WITH WHAT CONSEQUENCES!

Our Punishment

In view of our conduct, we are guilty of giving false witness, of perjury and concealing the Truth. As a consequence, we are facing precisely the same punishment that has been prescribed in the Law of God for such grave and heinous crimes. What is this law? When a people reject and turn away from God's guidance, when they are guilty of perjury and disloyalty to their Creator, and when they turn traitors to Him, then God punishes them severely in this world as well as in the world-to-come. This law was applied to the Children of Israel. Now it is we, the Muslim Ummah, who stand in the dock. God had no personal vendetta against the

Jews that He should have punished only them. Nor does He have any kinship or special relationship with Muslims that He should set us free even though we are now committing the same crime as they did then. In This World the punishment meted out to Muslims for their crimes in this world is there for all to see. Indeed, the extent and pace of our decline has been in true proportion to the extent and pace of our negligence and failure to do our duty to witness to the Truth and our 'progress' in witnessing to falsehood. During the last one hundred years, from Morocco to Indonesia, country after country has been lost by us to alien subjugation; one Muslim people after another have fallen under the yoke of colonial rule and domination. No longer does the word 'Muslim' stand for dignity, no longer does it command respect; rather it has become a mark of degradation, humiliation, gross backwardness, and utter powerlessness. How powerless have we become? We have lost all honour and respect in the eyes of the world. In some places, our blood has flowed like water and we have been subjected to large-scale massacres; in other places, we have been driven out of our homes; in others, we have been tortured and persecuted; in still others, we have been reduced to living as serfs. If in some places Muslim states have survived, they have suffered defeat after defeat until they have been reduced to positions of fear and impotency in the face of foreign powers. If only they had witnessed to Islam by their words and deeds, the secular powers would have stood in awe of them. Why go so far afield? Just look at your situation in India. Because you evaded your duty of bearing witness to the truth of Islam, indeed because you went further and gave false witness against it both by your words and deeds, the entire country was wrested from your control. First, you were vanquished by the Marathas and Sikhs, and later, servitude to the British rule became your fate. And now still greater calamities stare you in the face. Today your minority status has become your greatest anxiety; you live in fear of the Hindu majority lest it subjugates you and you meet the same fate as did the untouchables. But, for God's sake, tell me: Could a majority have threatened you if you had

only been true witnesses of Islam? Will not this problem of majority and minority vanish within a few years if today your words and actions bear true witnesses to Islam? In Arabia, an extremely hostile and oppressive majority set out to exterminate an insignificant minority of about one in one hundred thousand. With what result? Within ten years, this minority, by its truthful and trustworthy witness in favour of Islam, turned into a one hundred per cent majority. Later, when these witnesses of Islam emerged from Arabia, within twenty-five years, from Turkistan to Morocco, people after people trusted the probity of their witness and joined them in their faith. Where no one but Zoroastrians, Christians and pagans once lived, now only Muslims live. No intransigence, no chauvinism, no religious bigotry, proved strong enough to resist the living, true witness of the Divine guidance that Muslims gave.

If you are being trampled upon today, if you fear greater catastrophes tomorrow, is this not but the punishment for your false witness and concealment of the Truth?

Punishment in the World-to-Come

This is the punishment you are receiving in this world; but a more severe punishment is likely to be meted out to you in the world-to-come. How can you be absolved of the blame for every evil and every wrong to which man has been subjected only because you failed to do your duty as witnesses of the Truth? Unless you do your duty, whatever oppression and corruption is perpetrated in the world and whatever immorality and wickedness prevails, there is no reason why you should not be held accountable for it. You may not be responsible for originating them yourselves, but you are certainly responsible, because of your false witness, for maintaining and perpetuating them, for their origination by others, and for allowing them to spread.

WHAT IS OUR REAL PROBLEM?

Pseudo Problems

By now, brothers, you must have understood how we, as Muslims, ought to have been living and behaving, and how we in fact are living and behaving. You must also have realized what grave consequences we are suffering because of our conduct. You should, therefore, have no difficulty in seeing that the problems which Muslims consider crucial for their societies and which they are doing their utmost to solve by various devices some of them invented by them, but mostly copied from others are not their real problem. The time, energy and resources that they spend on solving these problems are simply being wasted. For example, we look upon ourselves as a minority engulfed by an overwhelming alien majority, or as a majority deprived of its sovereignty within its own territory, or as a nation subjugated and exploited by a foreign power, or as a people suffering from backwardness and poverty. Then we devote all our efforts to achieving objectives which emanate from these conceptions and images of ourselves. For instance, to objectives such as safeguarding and securing our status in a country as a minority, or to achieving sovereignty within our territorial boundaries, or to winning freedom from foreign domination, or to achieving the same levels of economic progress and development as those of the advanced nations. These and other similar issues may be the foremost concerns of those who are not Muslims, who do not accept God as their Lord and Guide, and may form the central objects of their endeavours. But for us Muslims they are not the primary problems; we face them only because we have been, and still are, neglecting to do our duty. Had we been true witnesses of Islam, we would not have found ourselves lost in such a dense jungle of complex and inextricable problems. If we now direct all our attention and endeavours to doing our duty instead of dissipating our energies on clearing the woods, they will clear in no time, and not only for ourselves but for all mankind. For, keeping the world clean and improving it is our responsibility;

as we have forsaken our appointed duty, the world has become infested with thorny woods. And no wonder that the most thorny part has fallen to our lot. Unfortunately, our religious and political leaders do not try to understand this simple but crucial reality. Everywhere they continue to convince the Muslims that their problems are the problems of a minority as against a majority, of material progress, of national security, of winning freedom and independence as a nation state. Furthermore, even the solutions that they recommend have been borrowed from non-Muslims. But just as I believe in God, so I believe that you are being misled, and that by following such paths you will never achieve your well-being and destiny.

Our Real Problem

What, then, is our real problem? If I do not tell you that clearly, without any reservation, I shall be doing you a great disservice. To my mind, your destiny, now and ever, depends on one issue only: How do you conduct yourselves in respect of God's guidance that has come to you through His Messenger, blessings and peace be on him? Because of this guidance you are Muslims. Because of this guidance, whether you like it or not, you have agreed to become ambassadors of Islam to the entire world. Therefore, only if you follow Islam totally and devotedly, if your words and actions bear true witness to its teachings, if your social and public conduct faithfully represents every aspect of Islam, will you rise from glory to glory in this world, and receive highest honours in the world-to-come. Then, in no time, the dark clouds of fear and anxiety, of disgrace and humiliation, of subjugation and slavery will disperse. Then, the truth of your message and the virtue of your character will capture mind after mind and heart after heart. Then, your prestige and reputation, your influence and authority, will hold sway over the world. Hopes of securing justice will be pinned on you, trust will be placed in your integrity and honesty, prospects of virtue will be confided in you, and authority will be accorded to your world. In contrast, the leaders of secularism will lose all credibility and

authority. Their philosophy and world-view, their economic and political ideologies, will prove fake and spurious when confronted by your truth and right conduct. The forces that today belong to the secular camp will, one by one, break away and join the camp of Islam. A time will, then, come when communism will live in fear of its very survival in Moscow itself, when capitalist democracy will shudder at the thought of defending itself even in Washington and New York, when materialist secularism will be unable to find a place even in the universities of London and Paris, when racialism and nationalism will not win even one devotee even among the Brahmans and Germans. The present era of abject humiliation will, then, become consigned to the pages of history. It will only serve to remind us of the days when the followers of a faith as universal and powerful as Islam were reduced to such stupidity that they trembled in the face of sticks and ropes while they held the staff of Moses under their arm. This future is yours! But only if you follow Islam sincerely and exclusively and serve as its faithful witnesses. Your present conduct, however, is entirely contrary. You have been blessed with the Divine guidance, but, like a snake guarding treasure, you neither benefit from it yourselves nor allow others to benefit from it. By calling yourselves Muslims, you have assumed for yourselves the position of Islam's representatives, but the combined witness of your words and deeds is being given mostly in favour of Ignorance (Jahiliyah), idolatry, materialism, and immorality. You have the Book of God with you, but you have put it on the shelf and, to seek guidance, you turn to all sorts of persons who lead to Kufr, and to sources which lead you astray. You claim to be the servants of the One God, but in fact you are serving every false god, every Satan, and every power in rebellion against God. You have friends and enemies, but it is always your personal, selfish interests that determine your friendship and enmity. In both cases you use Islam as a party to your cause. Thus, your conduct has, on the one hand, deprived your lives of the blessings that Islam has to offer you, and, on the other, you are alienating mankind

rather than attracting it to Islam. If you continue to behave in this manner, you can attain no good, either in this world or in the world-to-come. Its outcome, according to the Law of God, is that miserable situation in which you find yourselves. What the future holds for you may be much worse. To be truthful, perhaps, if you remove the label of Islam from yourselves and follow Kufr openly and sincerely, then you might at least make as much worldly progress as America, Russia and Britain have made. But, claiming to be Muslims and yet behaving as non-Muslims, closing the door of Divine guidance to mankind by representing Islam falsely before it, is such a heinous crime that it will never allow you to prosper in this world. There is no way you can avert the punishment prescribed by the Qur'an for this crime. Jewish history provides a living proof of this reality. You may turn to secular nationalism as a lesser evil, you may get yourself accepted as a separate nation and achieve whatever Muslim nationalism seeks to achieve. But none of this will help you. There is only one way to ward off the punishment of God. Turn back from your sin, and repent.

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The past, present and future of Muslims

The past, present and future of Muslims

[This speech was made on the 11th of November in the Ijtema-e-aam of Jamaat e Islami in 1951 in Karachi]

"Ladies and gentlemen, in my previous speeches I analyzed in detail our collective condition. I have described the ills that afflict us in various spheres and their reasons. In my speech today I shall tell you about the programme which will hopefully provide a useful solution for those ills.

Clarification regarding a misunderstanding

But before describing this programme, I wish to clarify a misunderstanding which can be created in this respect. If I describe the current ills with their reasons and offer a solution to them then it does create some kind of hope in you. But, don't be under the erroneous impression that we have assembled here for its temporary rectification and that our mission is like repairing some old dilapidated structures but only temporarily. If you think so then it would not be correct. The reality is that our own ongoing global mission is to eliminate all those systems which are based on man-made rules, have no relation with the "Hereafter" and totally disregard the guidance from the holy prophets.

As these man-made systems are destructive for mankind they should be replaced with those systems that are based on divine rule, based on concern for "Hereafter" and accept guidance of the holy prophets. This is simply because the ultimate success of mankind lies in following this system. This is the sole objective of all our efforts and all our programmes even though they might seem to be for a temporary time or place. They actually exist only to traverse a part of this (perpetual) path. We want this revolution to first come in our own country Pakistan so that this country becomes the means of rectification and reform for our world. And if we discuss the

present ills afflicting Pakistan it is only because it is an impediment in this path (of global reform).

So please do not misunderstand that the attempts at resolving these ills is our sole objective or that we want to rectify only a particular system and be satisfied at that. No! I want to tell you that even if these ills would not have existed then also we would have worked for this mission which we have adopted right from day one. That mission of ours is ongoing, unending and global. And whatever be the situation we have to work for it irrespective of the kinds of problems we encounter in whatever part of the world we reside.

Reviewing history

After this clarification I feel that just as you have analyzed the present ills afflicting your country in the same way you should also analyse the history of your country so that we can conclude whether this existing situation developed suddenly by accident or they have some deep roots or some long winding reasons. If you don't understand the matter from this perspective well you cannot fathom the width, depth or intensity of your present ills neither will you have the feeling or need for reformation nor will you understand why we consider partial reform to be futile. And on what basis it is our sound opinion that only through the untiring efforts and a comprehensive reformation programme by a virtuous yet disciplined Jamaat can there be fundamental changes in our contemporary systems and that minor changes through some insignificant initiatives will not serve any purpose.

An important event that had a major impact on our country's history in the last century was that a non-Muslim nation from a land thousands of miles away established itself here and it has been only a few years since we were freed from the yoke of enslavement. This fact is quite remarkable and has to be analyzed through many aspects.

The first question which we must study is that how did such a thing occur? Was it a coincidence which occurred

without reason? Was it Natures wrath on us innocents? Were we doing well and did not have any weakness or ill? Or was it that we were breeding some weaknesses and ills since a long time, the punishment for which came in the form of subjugation by foreign nation. If the reality is that we had certain weaknesses and ills which resulted in our destruction then we must find out what were those ills and weaknesses and whether we have overcome them or they continue to be breeding within.

The second question is that: Was this external calamity only something that occurred one time or did it bring along within its folds other calamities that impacted our morality, thought, culture, religion, economics and politics. If it did impact them then we must examine those different kinds of calamities in terms of the extent that they affected us and their after-effects.

The third question is: what was our reaction to these calamities? Was it one singular reaction or were there different reactions by different groups. If there were different reactions by different groups then what were the good and bad effects that can still be traced in our national life. I shall shed light in detail on these 3 questions so that the entire description of each ill afflicting us is presented before you and you see the reality of each ill and how far its roots go and seek their nutrition from which resource. After that only you will be able to understand this entire scheme which is there before us for healing and reform.

The reasons for our enslavement

Our enslavement in the last century was a result of our religious, moral, and intellectual decline over the last many centuries. We were slowly inching towards decline in different ways till we reached a point in which it was not possible for us to stand on our own feet and when we reached this situation some or the other calamity had to befall us. And then exactly

as expected such a thing did happen as mandated by the law of nature.

Our religious condition

. For that first we should investigate our religious condition in that era because for us religion is the most important thing that governs our life. Religion made us one community and one nation. It is only on the basis of religion that we can stand on our own feet.

Our history is testimony to this fact that Islam did not spread in this country because of any systematic efforts. The conquest of Sindh and (the time period of) a century after can be considered to be an exception. After that there was no systematic force which would on the one hand spread Islam and on the other hand wherever it spread there would be efforts to consolidate and strengthen it. It is a fact that in India Islam spread in an absolutely unorganized method. People accepted Islam by being positively influenced by either some learned personality or the honest dealings of some Muslim traders. In some places holy and devout sages influenced people through their noble character and pious life and a lot of people entered the fold of Islam. But neither did these different personalities have the means and resources to train and groom the people who under their influence had converted to Islam and neither were the rulers of that time bothered about making some arrangement for the Islamic training of these converts. Thus this heedlessness paved the way for the continued ignorance of our people.

If at all somebody benefited from the centres of education then it was the middle or the upper class. Common masses were ignorant of the Islamic teachings and deprived of its reformative effects. The result of that was tribe after tribe entered Islam but could not get rid of a lot of practices of Jahiliyyah (ignorance) which they had before accepting Islam. Not only this, even their way of thinking could not be changed completely. You can still find a lot of pagan beliefs and

superstitions in them which were bequeathed to them as a legacy from their non-Muslim ancestors. The only difference which occurred in them after becoming Muslim was that they replaced their old idols with some new ones which they picked up from Islamic history and instead of their old pagan rituals they adopted certain new Islamic rituals. Their practices remained the same, only its visible form changed. If you want proof of this then go to any place and take stock of the religious condition of the masses. And then search in history that before the advent of Islam what was the religion prevalent there? You will notice that even today the beliefs and practices bear similarity to their earlier religion and now exist but only in a different form. For example where Buddhism was prevalent earlier and certain artefacts of the Buddha were worshipped. In some places his tooth, his bones and in some places his relics became the centre of attention. Today you will observe that the same thing is being done for the holy hair of Prophet (peace be upon him) or his footstep or with the relics of other Islamic saints. In the same way if you look at the customs and traditions of old Muslim tribes and then analyse what customs are prevalent in the same non-Muslim tribes you will find very little differences between them.

This is an open proof of the fact that in the last few centuries the people who have been in charge of Muslim public life have severely neglected their core responsibility. They have not cooperated with the sages who spread Islam. Crores of people were attracted and entered the fold of Islam but the guardians and custodians of Islam did not make any arrangements for the training and education of these people, their intellectual reform and purification of their lives. That is why even after these peoples became Muslim they could not benefit from its teachings and the blessings of "Tawheed" (Monotheism). They could not save themselves from the evils of "Shirk" (polytheism) and "Jahiliyyah" (ignorance).

Kindly also ponder over the condition of our "Ulema" (religious scholars) in these past centuries. Some holy sages have actually rendered extraordinary services to Islam, some of

whose benefits we continue to accrue to this day. But on the whole our Ulema had unfortunately been busy in debates on trivial matters, blowing issues out of proportion, hiding the important and grave issues from the eyes of Muslims, making theological differences the basis of sectarianism and sowing the seeds of division within the Muslim community. The Ulema spent their entire lives studying works of philosophy and were neither attached to Quran and Hadith nor did they try to create this attachment in the people. If at all they had any interest in Fiqh (jurisprudence) it was limited to the supplementary or non-fundamental issues and arguments about differences of opinion (in the schools of thought). There was little inclination towards the core jurisprudence of "Deen". Thus wherever these "Ulema" exercised their effects, people became myopic and lost out on having broad vision and universal outlook. Today this entire legacy can be observed in their numerous fights, debates, sectarian differences and regular squabbles.

Then look at the condition of "Sufis". You will realize that with a few honourable exceptions who followed the real Sufism of Islam and taught it to others, all the rest preached a kind of "Tasawwuf" (mysticism) which was interpolated with "Ishraqi" (Illuminationist), "Vedantic", "Maanwi" and "Zoroastrian" philosophies. And in which the practices of mystics, hermits, and ascetics were mixed in such a way that they had little relation with the real and pure teachings of Islam. People would approach them in search for divine guidance and they would mislead them. Later these Sufis bequeathed their legacy to their followers and subjects and their successors instead of imparting training only kept demanding gifts from them. The entire effort of these circles has been and is so even today, that the correct concept of Deen should not reach the people under their influence. Because they very well know that the effect of their piety on the masses will remain only till as time they are ignorant about the real teachings of their religion.

Moral condition

This was our religious condition which played a very big role in leading us to slavery in the 19th century. Now look at our situation from a moral perspective then you will realize that our middle class which is the backbone of any society became mercenaries because of continuous moral decay. Its principle was that our services are on hire and can be rendered in the service of any cause. Thousands and lakhs of Muslim soldiers were ready to become mercenaries whom anyone could employ fight with whoever he wished. And thousands and lakhs more were present to offer their physical and intellectual energies on more and less equal wages to every conqueror to run his administration and even in his political machinations.

Every enemy made use of this moral weakness. Whether they were Marathas, the French or the Dutch and finally the British; they all gained victory on us with the swords of our own people and ruled us using the strength of our hands and minds. Our moral sensibilities had been numbed to such a degree that not only did we fail to understand the blunder of this approach, but we were even proud of it. Hence our poet writes eulogizing his family that: "from 100 generations we have been mercenaries". Although for anyone to become a mercenary is a matter of great dishonour and ignominy not something to be proud of. Shame on these mercenaries, who did not discern between right and wrong. For them friend and foe were the same. They were ready to hunt for whoever offers him food and clothing. They did not bother about whom they are attacking and for whom. To expect any kind trustworthiness and perpetual loyalty of a people with this kind of moral condition is wishful thinking. When they can sell their own selves at the hands of the enemy then to expect any powerful and holy conscience is simply impossible.

It should be no surprise if they called their usurped and stolen wealth as the grace of God and be worshippers of the present age and bow down to the rising sun. And why would they not have that characteristic of sacrificing his utmost for a

cause towards which he is receiving his salary. From this you can understand that the qualities that the majority of our professional classes are displaying are not a weakness by chance that developed in them all of a sudden. But rather its roots are deeper down in our traditions.

However if at all we regret anything it is the fact that our enemies were exploiting them before and today too they are being used by the leaders of our community who should have actually been healing the diseases of the community, not exploiting those diseases.

Our Ulema were also part of the weakness of our middle class. Even though a small group with high morals and strong character was present similar in the Ulema as in the middle class, there were also present some revered personalities who realized their obligations and discharged them by sacrificing their lives. No wealth of this world was able to purchase them. But in general whatever condition existed in the middle class, similar was the case with our Ulema. In them most of them were getting royal pensions. Associating with some leader, king or minister and to interpret religious rulings according to their whims and fancies, to hold personal interests over the religious responsibilities for their descendants, to crush the Ulema who uphold truth with weapons of religion has been their specialty. They have been filtering flies and devouring camels. Regarding the people without wealth or high connections their religious zeal has been so sharp that they are unwilling to pardon them even in "Mustahab" (recommended), "Makroohaat" (disliked) and the smallest of "Juziyaat" (partial) and started very big fights with them. In contrast for the wealthy people and for those in power whether they are Muslim or not they have forever been expedient, accommodating and found excuses for them not only in Juziyat (partial) but also in Kulliyat (complete).

And as for our rulers for them only 2 things interested them one is food and the other sex. Other than these 2 things nothing else held any importance. All efforts and all services were directed for them. And with public monies the arts and

crafts which served these 2 were promoted. Other than this if any ruler has used his wealth for some greater cause then all the other rulers united and ensured his defeat. And with his enemies they did not hesitate to made secret deals.

Intellectual condition

After this when take stock of our intellectual condition we will realize that since a long there has been no significant research activity. All our learning and teaching was restricted to "Uloom e Awail" (basic knowledge). In our system of education this notion had taken deep root that whatever work our ancestors have done they are the last word in intellectual research and no addition to it is further required. The biggest contribution one can make is to add explanations, commentaries and marginal notes only and our writers and educationists were busy doing that only. No new thought, no new research, no new endeavour can be seen in the recent past centuries.

Because of that almost an intellectual stagnation has covered our intellectual canvas. Obviously the community who has been caught is such a state would not be able to remain free for a long time, it had to be enslaved by some or the other nation which has vigour and progresses ahead. That nation creates awareness amongst its masses. Her people have a sense of responsibility towards whatever obligations they feel accountable. Her workers and cadre have a selfless and continuous loyalty. Their intellectual class is busy in research and invents new powers and new technologies. Her ingenious people may utilize these new inventions in day to day life for the benefit of all. And they are updated in culture and civilization, moving continuously towards progress in all domains of life. Amongst such a live and vibrant community lives an ignorant people who are intellectually stagnant and morally corrupt. How long could it be holding sway? Thus it was not a coincidence but a requirement of the law of Nature that we should become enslaved one by one by the developed western nations.

The foundations of western civilization

Now we look at what the western nation that subjugated, empowered and enslaved us brought along with it. What was its religion, thought, philosophies, moral principles, culture and civilization; on what principles was its politics based and to what extent all these things influenced us.

Religion

The centuries, in which we were continuously in decline, exactly at the same time Europe was emerging with the help of a modern Reformation movement. This movement clashed with European religious establishment and ended on a note that was destructive not only for Europe but the entire world.

The old Christian doctrine and the Biblical concept of the creation of the universe were based on Greek philosophy and Greek concepts of proof and knowledge. The Church thought that if this construct was dislodged even a little bit then its whole edifice would collapse like a pack of cards and would bring an end to religion itself. Hence they were not ready to accept any introspection or criticism which casts doubts and aspersions on their doctrine based on Greek philosophy and science neither could they tolerate any philosophical thesis who could provide an alternate belief system forcing the Church to rethink its core doctrines. Neither could they give permission for any religious research which contradicted the Biblical version of the creation of man and the universe and proved the theologians wrong. They felt this to be a direct danger to religion and their entire culture & civilization.

As opposed to this those who were upholding the modern reformation and research work, slowly realized the inherent weaknesses of this philosophy on which Christian belief and theology rested. But as and when they progressed in this field the Church because of their religious and political clout tried to put more and more obstacles in their path. A lot of awareness was generated (by the reformers) but the Church insisted that instead of re-evaluating its own established facts those who

propagated these new ideas themselves should be punished. One could point out many discrepancies in these old Christian theories, which were earlier thought to be unchangeable and absolute doctrine. The Church however would respond saying that instead of pondering on their proofs the minds who propose these ideas must be done away with.

The first result of this struggle was that knowledge & awareness (Renaissance) developed a sort of reaction against religion and the people of religion (the Christian clergy) and this reaction kept proportionally increasing and spreading with the oppression by the Church. This reaction was then not confined to Christianity and the Church but soon religion itself became its target. Modern science and their custodians understood that religion is just pretence (acting / drama) and cannot hold itself against logical scrutiny. Its doctrine / beliefs are not based on proofs but on blind superstition. It is afraid of the spread of the light of education fearing that it might get exposed. Then when this struggle (between science and religion) spread from religion into politics and the economy and different fields of public life and when the Church was completely defeated, the custodians of modern culture came up with a new system.

This resulted in 2 more things that left a deep impact on future humanity. First was that religion was totally ejected from every domain of this new system and the boundaries of religion were confined to merely personal belief and practice. In this new system religion has no place in politics, economics, morality, law, knowledge and arts i.e. in any domain of public life and has no right to interfere in any of it. It is merely a personal issue of an individual. Any individual if he wants to believe in God and the Prophets may do so and is allowed to follow their guidelines, but public life will be completely out of its purview and jurisdiction. Religion should not have any say in public affairs or public life.

The other thing inherent in this new culture was that it was completely deep rooted in irreligiousness. This reaction (against religion) was very apparent and visible in whatever

progress there was in arts and culture that started with the Renaissance and which opposed anything associated with religion. This new culture strongly believed that whatever religion propagates related to belief in God, Prophethood the Hereafter or some moral principle or tradition: it should not be accepted and must be subjected to doubts and aspersions. These religious principles must present some proof of their validity. And if the proof cannot be produced then they should be rejected. In contrast whatever arts and knowledge comes from worldly sources should be accepted unless there is proof that it is wrong. This influenced the entire thought process of the West and it not only excluded religion from knowledge and the arts but also all philosophies pertaining to public life. Thus the contemporary system and theories of collective life became practically bereft of God worship and concept of the hereafter.

Philosophy about life

This was then the approach towards religion of the incoming victorious culture. Let us now examine its philosophy about life, which was adopted after rejecting religion. Its philosophy was completely materialistic. The Western thinkers refused to acknowledge any Unseen reality which could not be observed through human sensory system and they also rejected Revelation and Divine inspiration and could not accept that communication with the Unseen was possible. Then their scientific spirit was also opposed to the derivation of theories based on Unseen powers and if at all some theory was attempted to be construed then it could not stand up against scientific research. Hence when they could not decipher the Unseen beyond theories of skepticism and agnosticism, they had no alternative but to infer on the basis of sense observation everything regarding life and its domains.

This made their philosophy about life completely materialistic and devoid of spirit. They understood that man is like an animal species that inhabits this earth. He is neither bound nor responsible to anyone. He does not get any Divine guidance also. He must seek his own guidance. And if at all

there is any source of this guidance then they are the laws of nature or the knowledge of animal life or the past history of mankind. They understood that the only life we have is this worldly life. Success and happiness is the only motive for our worldly life and the good and bad results in this world are only what matter. Their understanding was life is in fulfilling the requirements of our pleasures and desires.

They understood that reality is only that which could be measured or whose weight or value that could be quantifiable. The unquantifiable are non-real and hold no value. To go after them is a waste of time. I am not talking about the philosophies which originated in the West and were written and taught in colleges and universities. I am referring to that concept of creation of man and the Universe which Western civilization has absorbed within itself and the concept which exists and is ingrained in every common western mind coming under its influence. This then is the exact brief as I have described before you.

After this there are 3 major philosophical viewpoints which emerged in the 18th and 19th century when we were enslaved by the West. I shall describe them not from the point of view of its details but from the point of view of its spirit and its dominance on our entire culture. I shall specially mention them here because the influence they had on human life was unmatched.

Hegel's philosophy of history

Among these philosophies about the history of mankind the first one that we shall consider is that of Hegel. Briefly what it says is that the culture and civilization that exists at a point of time in history along with all its sub-domains is based on some ideology which marks it as an era of that culture. When this age or era of that civilization matures then its weaknesses start becoming apparent and there are some other competing ideologies that start emerging instead, which start challenging and clashing with that civilization. Out of this

clash is born a new civilization which have the remnants of the earlier civilization and certainly some new good things also are created out of the conciliation that occurs between the old and new civilization. Then this new civilization also matures and gives birth from its own womb to certain opposing ideologies and then the clash and conflict starts afresh. And then with the reconciliation of these two ideologies a third era is created which has the remnants of the merits of the previous civilization and absorbs the new merits of the new ideology. In this way Hegel explained the history of mankind.

The common mind was thus significantly influenced into believing that every previous civilization was destroyed because of its weaknesses and has passed on some of its strengths and merits on to the succeeding civilization. In other words the contemporary civilization that you live in is the by-product of all that was good and meritorious in the earlier civilizations. If at all there is any chance or possibility of any progress in civilization then it is in the clash of new and earlier civilization. Thus there is no scope to seek guidance and enlightenment from the earlier era. That is because those aspects of that civilization which were not adopted in the later times were already tried and found incomplete and deficient and hence neglected and abandoned. If at all they merit some historical interest then it can only be to the extent that we appreciate that it had been something remarkable in that previous era and has played its role in the progress of civilization but holds no value in today's age which people look up to. History has already given its verdict about it.

Please ponder how dangerous this philosophy is. In whichever mind this theory of the history of civilization becomes ingrained, is it possible for him to hold any value for those things of previous civilizations to which Ibrahim (as), Moosa (as) and Muhammad (pbuh) belonged. Can he ever look at the era of Prophethood and the rightly guided Caliphs for guidance? Actually this is such a powerful intellectual and well evidenced weapon that the root of religious leaning would be totally cut off from the minds on which it is strikes.

Darwin's theory of evolution

The second philosophy that emerged in the 19th century and influenced the minds of people was the Theory of Evolution by Darwin. I will not discuss his theory about life sciences. I shall delve on only the philosophical effects of his theory, his supporting evidence and its resultant inferences. His thought penetrated and influenced contemporary and global thought on a vast scale. The common mind's opinion about the creation of the universe was influenced by Darwin significantly and this opinion was that the universe is a battlefield where at every instance there is an eternal struggle for survival. The law of Nature is that everyone has to fight and struggle in order to survive. And in the eyes of nature only those deserve to survive who give proof of their active endeavour for survival. In this merciless system those who perish are weak and they deserve to perish. And the one who survives does so because he is strong and fit and he qualifies to survive. Only the strong have rights over the earth and its atmosphere and its vast resources as they have given proof of their ability to live. The weak have no rights. They should make way for the strong. And might is right even though they (unjustly) remove the weak and replace them.

Just ponder if this theory about the universe captures the minds and if the laws of nature are viewed from this perspective. What would man think about others and humanity. In this philosophy grief, sharing, love, mercy, sacrifice and other noble human qualities will hold little place. In this justice, trustworthiness, truthfulness and honesty will not be there. Here right and wrong lose their meaning. How can oppression have any meaning unless the strong (who commits oppression) can be held guilty and proved wrong? Mankind has fought against each other before too but it was considered tumult and oppression. But now (under Darwin's theory) this fight is an absolute requirement of nature because the universe itself is a battleground. There was oppression before too but now it has acquired a new logic through which it has become justified as a right of the strong. With the help of this theory the European colonists who oppressed other nations got a clear

proof or justification (for their atrocities). They subjugated nations as if it was their right which they acquired as per the law of nature. The weak deserved to perish and the ones who replaced them had the full right to do so. If at all the West had some guilty conscience (as a result of their inhuman and unjust colonization) then Darwin's theory removed that with its logic and observations. Whatever impact Darwin's theory had on science is something else but by influencing the society and civilization it has turned man into a brutal savage.

Marx's theory of dialectical materialism

Similarly there was another philosophy which came out of the womb of Darwin's theory of evolution. I shall not debate its details or proofs here neither will I comment on its intellectual position. What I want to highlight is that this theory of Marx gave the same concept about life which Hegel gave; when he proposed that the world was like a battlefield. Darwin showed that the universe and nature was like a battleground and Marx projected the same to be the basis of human society. In this projection (by Marx) we see man to be struggling and fighting from the beginning. His nature is that he should fight his own species for its needs and wants. He clashes with other classes of society merely for the sake of his own survival. Marx opined that humanity has progressed along the path of history through the struggle amongst its different classes. Not only is there a struggle between nations and communities but even within a nation / community, this struggle is a demand of nature. In this theory we see that if at all there is any relation between humans then it is only that of their mutual needs and wants. Thus to fight for the sake of economic betterment even if they are your own relatives from the same community or religion is absolutely justified, correct and natural. In fact to refrain from such fighting would be something un-natural.

Morality

These were the philosophies and beliefs which the conquering nation carried along and impacted us. Let us now see the result of these theories and philosophies. After removing God and His Prophet (pbuh) what remained were materialistic values and the only basis or foundations for anything could be (scientific) observation & experiment. It was simply not possible for anyone to talk about religious values or the pious teachings of the noble Prophets. And whosoever tried this in the West failed. In the climate of irreligiousness and rejection of "Life after Death" the philosophy that grew and got acceptance in the western life was that of "Utilitarianism[1]" mixed with (the Greek philosophy of) "Hedonism".

This was the foundation of Western civilization and the Western way of life. Irrespective of the explanations offered in books about Utilitarianism and Hedonism, it is absolutely irrefutable that it is at the core of Western culture, ethics and morality.

In other words if at all something has to qualify as being useful then it has to be useful to me or to my community. And by 'useful' it means worldly benefit. Any utility, pleasure or any material object which is useful to me or my community is virtue and can become my motive and objective for which my energies should be expended. Those which are not and which do not serve any purpose or utility in this world to me and my community can simply be ignored. In contrast whatever is harmful from a worldly perspective and which deprives you from worldly utility and pleasure that is sin and crime. You

[1] (*Utilitarianism is the idea that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its usefulness in maximizing utility/minimizing negative utility (utility can be defined as pleasure, preference satisfaction, knowledge or other things) as summed among all sentient beings. Hedonism is a school which argues that pleasure is the only intrinsic good. This is often used a s a justification for evaluating actions in terms of how much pleasure and how little pain (i.e. suffering) they produce. In very simple terms, a hedonist strives to maximize this net pleasure (pleasure minus pain - Translator).

must avoid them. There is no permanent standard for good and bad in this moral system, no enduring principle for ethics, everything is (expendable & superfluous) extra, additional and temporary. For the benefit of oneself and one's community any rule or principle can be made or broken. Utility and pleasure can be obtained through any means. Whatever is virtue today may become evil tomorrow. There are different standards for truth and for falsehood. Any difference in the permissible and prohibited and any permanent difference in truth and falsehood is a foolish theory which modernism has left far behind.

Politics

These were the morals and ethics which came with a conquering awe and subjugated us. Now let us look at the political system which was established here and which flourished under the tutelage of Western leadership. It was established and founded on 3 principles.

1. Secularism which means irreligiousness
2. Nationalism which means nation-worship
3. Democracy which means the sovereignty of the majority.

The first principle of secularism meant that religion and God has no relationship with politics and public life. People should be allowed to lead their worldly life according to their wishes and are completely free to do so and can make any rule, principle, law or theory for that. God has no say in this matter and neither can we invoke God in this regards. However, if some big calamity strikes us then secularism permits one to invoke God at that time. And in this instance it would be compulsory for God to help us.

The meaning of the second principle was that the "nation state" should occupy the position from where God was dislodged. The nation is the deity and national interest is the criteria for right or wrong. Material progress, pride and dominance over other nations are desirable qualities and the sacrifice of individuals for the same is permissible and compulsory. The meaning of this nationalism which our

foreign masters interpreted here was the concept of secular nationalism which along with community-worship became doubly dangerous at least for us Muslims. Because in a nation state having three fourth non-Muslim population, community worship means that we (the minority Muslims) cannot become devout and fervent Muslims lest we be branded as antinational or being traitors to the nation we live in.

The meaning of the third principle was that majority rule should ascend the position of religion after dislodging it. Majority rule is absolute and irrespective of religious teachings. Whatever the majority feels right becomes right and whatever they say is wrong becomes wrong. Whatever laws and rules the majority makes become the religion of the people and only the majority have the legitimate and exclusive right to make amendments in this religion.

Effects of the dominant culture

This was then the politics, the morals, the philosophies and the different ideas about religion which came from foreign lands, subjugated us and became part of our history. I already narrated to you the weaknesses that engulfed us at that time and described to you the culture these foreign powers brought along.

It is obvious that this culture had not come here through some tourists, travellers or sailors. It was actually the culture of the ruling class, who held complete sway over the existing way of life. This was quite unprecedented as previously no ruling government was able to enjoy such unchallenged dominance on contemporary culture. The intellectual and material dominance held the populace in great awe and wonder and mesmerized them beyond compare. They had complete control over printing and publication, education, law and judiciary and all the economic forces and resources. Thus their rule had such a wide ranging effect and was so intense that none of the aspects of our way of life could escape from their dominance.

The effect of education system

They imposed their education system on us and which meant that now the key to economic survival lay at the doors of their educational institutions. Thus generation after generation entered these educational institutions and absorbed all their theories and practices whose core and essence was the exact antithesis of our culture. Although they could not convert even 1 out of 100,000 into a "Kafir" yet they were successful in changing his thoughts, his interests and his intuitions. But as far as morals and character was concerned they did not allow even 2% of them to remain "Muslim". This was the single biggest loss that they inflicted on us. That is because the roots of our own culture withered in our hearts and minds and we ourselves sowed the seeds of a diametrically opposite culture.

The effect of economic system

They also imposed their economic system on us with all its attendant economic theories and philosophies. This they did in such a way that the doors of sustenance and survival could open only for those who whole heartedly adopted and embraced the principles of their economic system. It was successful in making us consumers of the "haram" (prohibited) and then gradually removed the difference between "halal" (permissible) and haram from our minds. Soon a huge majority amongst us stopped believing in those Islamic teachings which declared as "haram" the means of sustenance which in the Western economic system was absolutely legal and permissible.

The effect of law

They imposed their laws on us, which not only modified the contours of our culture and civilization in practice but also changed our perception about public life and legal matters. Those who have studied law know that it is intrinsically linked to morality and society. Whenever one promulgates law, one has a certain picture about the culture, civilization and

economy which that law wants the society to embrace or aspire to. When it dismisses or abolishes a certain law then what it is actually doing is negating the moral principle or social theory on which that law was based. It thus totally changes that canvas or way of life which was derived from that law.

Thus when our British colonial masters abolished all the "Sharia'" laws and legislation which were prevalent in this country and replaced them with their own laws, it did not mean that one set of laws were replaced with another set of laws but it meant that an entire system of morality and culture was uprooted and in its place a new culture and morality was implanted.

To entrench and consolidate this change they started teaching their legal theories and practice in our colleges and universities of law. This ingrained in the minds of people that the old laws were no longer useful for establishing a new and modern society and this new Western legal system along with its theories and principles is more correct and "modernist" (able to cope up with contemporary issues). It also weakened our fundamental belief that the right to legislation (framing law) is exclusive to Allah. Instead they spread this idea that Allah has nothing to do with legislation and that this is the job of parliament which can decide about what is compulsory, obligatory, what is permissible and what can be termed as a crime.

Then the effect these new laws had on our morality and culture was absolutely devastating. Suffice is it only to state that they made adultery, wine, intoxicants and lot of other vices as "halal" (permissible). Under the protection of these laws a lot of evils and vices were born and bred and it destroyed whatever little moral fabric had remained with us even in our period of decline.

But now the conditions have deteriorated to such an extent and our religious sensibility has become so sterile that even our reformers, the pious and devout do not find anything wrong in becoming lawyers and judges in this new legal system. Matters

have reached such a low that in contrast the people who wanted to revive the Islamic laws and rule of Allah are dismissed out of hand and considered to be "outcasts".

Effect of Morality and Social Behaviour

They (the West) imposed their moral depravity and cultural norms on us. To gain their proximity and be foremost in their ranks was exclusively reserved for those who were closest to them in moral character and in line with their social behaviour. This then became a guarantee for ones influence in society, economic prosperity and material progress.

That is why slowly our upper class and behind them the middle class were inclined in that direction. As a consequence photography, cinema, radio and the live examples of our leaders began to spread this disease to the masses. The net impact of all this has been that in one century we have progressively declined to reach a point where co-education is being tolerated, girls from respectable families are drinking and dancing. Noble ladies are becoming film actresses are displaying such vulgarity which would put even our prostitutes to shame. And thousands watch the (military) parade of their daughters and sisters and laud and appreciate them. Very soon we might then reach a level where questions could then be raised within us as in the West like: what is wrong with being an unwed mother and having illegitimate children? Why should they not be given status of legally wed mothers and legitimate children? The West also did not reach this point in one stroke. The West reached this point after passing through these very stages which we are now passing through.

Effect of political system

They then imposed their political theories and political institutions on us which proved no less destructive for our religion and worldly affairs. Their secularism made our religious thought hollow, and their nationalism and democracy crushed us so much for almost an entire century; we lost

millions of lives and countless women lost their honour and with great difficulty we were able to salvage and save just half of our community. These cruel fools did not ponder for a moment how the Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and the backward castes of India could ever be united under one "democracy" in which the majority would become rulers and law makers and the minority would have to mould public opinion and keep struggling to become a majority.

They never tried to understand that here the majority and minority are not merely political majority and political minority but in fact they are national majority and national minority. They had a huge responsibility of looking at the present condition and future situation of over 35 crores people. Yet they did not spend even a minute to understand that the amalgam of these communities which they assumed to be one nation or community in order to establish secular democracy would imply that the most populous amongst them would become the largest majority and the national identity, religion and culture of all the remaining communities would be destroyed. That majority would blindly and forcibly impose its own principles and practices on the minority. Every nook and corner of India suffered from this poison of mutual hatred and the blood and horrendous slaughter of innocents kept reminding people that this system is wrong and deeply flawed. It is against the nature of this population and is being imposed on it unjustly. But they did not even bother to take notice.

Neighbours sharing the same wall clamour for each other's blood but our political masters did not bother to rethink their policy. Then when the situation deteriorated and reached a stage that there was no other recourse except to partition the country, they divided the country in such a way that rivers of blood flowed and mountains of corpses became the boundary between India and Pakistan. And this partition instead of becoming conciliation for previous fights became the basis of many new disputes which no one knows till what time shall keep the people of this subcontinent busy in mutual hatred and conflict. I accept that these foreign rulers have done some good

things also. Because of them material progress definitely took place here and the different aspects of modern education also proved useful. I do not deny their value and importance. But compared to these benefits there are countless more moral, spiritual, and material losses that we had to endure because of their political hegemony.

Our reaction

After that we must take stock of our reaction to the sweeping tide of this conquering culture. We must examine what shape that reaction took and what affect both good and bad it had and which we now see in our community life. On the whole there have been 2 totally different reactions each of which had vast and deep-rooted after effects and they continue to still affect us. I will present them separately before you. Then I shall also put forth before you their negative and harmful effects.

Apologetic reaction

The reaction of one of our groups was that: let us accept the fact that this powerful and progressive nation has conquered and subjugated us. It would be logical and prudent to therefore derive and accept everything that it offers us. We must seek the education it is giving, adopt the social system it is propagating, accept the laws it is implementing, blend into the economy it is offering and approve the political system it is establishing. In this reaction you can get a sense of feeling overwhelmed and being overpowered along with the spirit of defeatism.

From the beginning this group thought that after becoming subjugated and conquered by the Western foreign powers it was not possible to wage war or struggle (against them). If we fight them then we will suffer in all respects and so we have no other choice except to avail and make full use of whatever opportunities we get from this new system.

However it would be pertinent to note that whoever adopted this strategy could immediately feel the many harms and losses in their first generation itself. It is only natural for any community to face these losses if it adopts a strategy of being apologetic and contrite and accepting whatever the antagonistic and adversarial culture has to offer. Their succeeding generations would suffer the same, perhaps even more. This disease of apologetically accepting whatever the adversarial culture has to offer continued to spread from a miniscule influential minority to the entire middle class and the poor masses who were watching this on the side-lines also got infected.

A large majority of the educated class accepted the viewpoint of West regarding religion. It did not occur to them that the Western understanding of religion was because of their approach towards Christianity and the Church and not because of their approach towards Islam. They accepted the legitimacy of the Western reaction towards religion which was actually a reaction against the Christian clergy and related religious matters.

Their position was that everything that comes from Islam should be doubted and everything of Islam must be subject to the requirement of proof and evidence but this does not apply to the philosophies and thoughts which Western philosophers, scientists or experts of sociology present in the name of knowledge. They accepted this Western premise without any critical analysis that religion is a private matter and should have no relation to public life. This thought got so well entrenched in their minds that today those who without applying their minds keep repeating that "Islam is a complete way of life" also by their behaviour continue proving that Islam is only a "private" religion which cannot involve itself in public affairs. In fact in the majority of them Islam is not even a private religion because in their own personal lives accepting and professing Islam does not go beyond performing marriage rites and certain other birth rites like circumcision etc. They do

not show any visible signs of professing Islamic morals or Islamic practice in their lives.

The attitude of those who had some leaning towards religiosity or their inclination towards piety was revived later was that the West along with its thoughts, philosophies and prevalent practices should be considered as the standard of truth. Thus our Islamic beliefs, our way of life and our history should be tampered and modified by trying to blend it with the West. It was therefore attempted that everything of Islam should be changed and brought to such a level that it attains compatibility with the West and if it cannot be made compatible with the West then we should disown it completely. And what cannot be disowned then for that we should offer some excuses and be apologetic about it.

Their majority adopted the Western way of life along with its philosophical foundations exactly as it is and did not feel the need to analyse it critically. This was the logical effect of the education imparted to them from school till the university.

The way history, philosophy, economics, political science, law and other streams of knowledge were taught to them, it was inevitable for them to have the same mentality as their Western masters and their world view could only be that of the West. Few rejected God and the Hereafter publicly but influenced by Western education there were so many with a materialist mentality who did not care about the Hereafter, who did not consider the Unseen to have any reality and who did not feel any worth and importance of spiritual values. For them in this world mankind was waging a ruthless struggle for survival.

In our period of decline the roots of our morality had already become weak and fragile and our rulers had turned rich and luxury loving. Our middle class had become "mercenaries" (ready to kill for money) and we lacked any constant and selfless dedication to any cause. Then when all this got combined with the Western philosophy of morality, it gave rise to such personalities and characters that were an embodiment

or personification of all that was wrong with the West and became symbolic of the West bereft of all its goodness.

Professing and practicing "Utilitarianism", "Hedonism" and leading a life without any principles our society has reached a level which is at par with where the Western character has reached. But in the West at least there is some objective or aim of life and there is a lot of hard work and dedication but in our society there seems to be no objective or higher purpose of life. In the West at least you can find loyalty, dedication and sincerity in the people but here everything is commercialized and for sale and can be purchased for money and one's personal interest.

There in the West some moral evils are still considered "taboo" and are permitted to be inflicted only on other nations. You will not be allowed to perpetrate those evils against one's own nation and will be considered a great crime. But here in our society lies, deceit, plotting, selfishness, breaking trusts, scheming, instigating and intimidation and killing your own people is considered normal and people do not feel any remorse in doing so. In America or England any character like this would never be tolerated but here big parties emerge and flourish with these morals and people with such wrong and feeble morals are regarded as most appropriate for community leadership.

The effects of Western subjugation on social sciences, economics and law which I have just now discussed were accepted and spread mostly by the group who had this apologetic reaction to the wave of Western imperialism. However what is most surprising is their reaction against the political system established by the West. This group prides itself most on its political understanding and sagacity. But they have proved themselves most incompetent in this regard. The secularism, nationalism and democracy on which the Indian polity was based and which was consolidating itself continuously since the second half of the 19th century: if the Hindus accepted it then it was something natural because every aspect of it was useful to them. But for Muslims every aspect

of it was destructive. So for Muslims, not to challenge the foundations of that political system was a clear proof that although their modern and educated class had studied politics they had really not understood anything of it. They were so much influenced and overawed by the West they accepted it as Divine Guidance and did not dare to test, analyse and challenge it with the touchstone of truth.

They studied politics with this defeatist mentality and the result was that they accepted all of its theories, philosophies and ideologies blindly. They did not have so much intellect so as to examine the foundations of the political system neither had they the guts to challenge these foundations intellectually and tell their Western masters that your rules will not run here. They lost half the battle the day when they accepted the principles of democracy, secularism and nationalism as the cardinal truth. After that both the policies propagated by these people with "defeatist" mentality failed. One is their opposition to the British granting more and more political rights to the indigenous population of this country and the other was that in this totally unjust and imbalanced political system, Muslims should be awarded such protection and reservation which could save them of its destructive consequences.

Finally when that political system became strong and reached its final and concluding stage then we had to accept it without any choice and that half of us should go to the grave and half should survive (we had to suffer the devastating cost of the partition of our country). Even after this disaster our political leaders have still not understood the various faults in the very foundations of this political system which sent us to our graves. Hence they have kept this political system intact to this day and have no inclination to change and modify it. Now you don't have to be a fool to understand that the studies and experiments that these people continue to perform has utterly failed to create any political insight or enlightenment in them.

There is no doubt that this apologetic reaction was harmful but at the same time it cannot be denied that there were some benefits that it offered. Through this our old passivity was

broken and we became aware of the latest developments in the world and we enhanced our vision. We escaped the great loss which could have occurred if only non-Muslims had received modern education exclusively enabling them to be part of the system of governance and depriving the Muslims to have any role therein. Lots of people got experience of running different departments of the government. I do not deny any of these benefits. But along with this also it is a fact that our concept of religion, concept of morality, philosophy of life, our values, our personal character and public culture changed and we were consequently weakened. We emerged from the blind following of our ancestors but then started the blind following of stranger and strangers with poor character. This destroyed us in religion and in this world.

Passive reaction

There was another group with exactly the opposite reaction. The first group was swept away by the conquering wave of foreign domination but this group stood like the rock of Gibraltar in front of it. This group tried to the best of its ability to preserve the knowledge, religion, morality and social system bequeathed by their ancestors of the 18th century and received by people of the 19th century. However this preservation resulted in including all that was right or wrong within.

They theorized that no influence of the new victorious and dominating culture should be accepted neither should we waste time in understanding it. The strategy this group adopted in preserving the old culture and civilization in their clash with the western civilization, till this day they stand by it and have not made any changes or modifications. They did not spend a single moment seriously examining the legacy they would be leaving for their next generation and never pondered over what should remain intact and what should be modified. Neither did they seriously think about what the future culture would be capable and ready to accept. They did not make any serious efforts to understand the reasons behind the mistakes our

previous generations made which were responsible for our defeat. And what was the secret behind the power, knowledge, practice and their subjugation by a nation that was situated thousands of miles away.

Instead of pondering and reflecting on these points they exerted all their efforts in preserving their old antiquated systems and conditions and still and continue to do so. Their system of education, their academic syllabus is same as was in the beginning of the 19th century. Their hobbies are the same, their problems are the same, their way of thinking is the same, their methodology is the same and the specialty or distinguishing feature of their entire ethos is still the same. Whatever good it had is still preserved and whatever faults it had are also conserved.

I accept that in this second kind of reaction there was and is a valuable element and I respect it as much as it deserves to be respected. Whatever knowledge of the Quran, Hadith and "Fiqh" (jurisprudence) is preserved in us is only because of their efforts. It is a great contribution of our pious ancestors that they preserved our "Deen" and its morals and passed it on to succeeding generations. It is without doubt a very valuable service that someone preserved the specialties of our (Islamic) culture in these trying and opposing circumstances.

I also accept that the people who started this reaction were handicapped too a great extent. When they had to fight against the opposing dominant culture; at that time they were probably not equipped to protect anything more than their own household and hence they did at least that much. Their inability and limitation as compared to the impediment of the leaders of the first kind of reaction is no less weighty and worthy of consideration. I give allowance and excuse the leaders of the first group by saying that in the first fight that took place between them and the new and strange dominating wave of foreign imperialism, it was not possible for them to think anything else except the survival of their community and that it was their responsibility to protect it from complete annihilation

and being converted to a backward and regressive class. They thus adopted the way they thought was most appropriate.

Similar allowance should be offered to the early leaders of the group having the second reaction who tried to preserve the religious identity of their culture.

But the law of nature does not accept apologies and excuses. Any work, accomplished with whatever good intentions if it contains elements that causes loss and harm would definitely cause that harm and makes that loss, no matter what noble intentions lie beneath. And in reality what loss and harm it resulted in has to be accepted and should not be denied.

The first loss was that in an attempt to preserve the ancient and old religious and moral heritage all that was good and bad in it was also preserved. We inherited this combined legacy and heritage with the good and bad, exactly as it is and completely intact. And now unfortunately it is becoming an obstacle against a true Islamic revolution in the same way as our Westernized leadership.

The second loss was the real core of our "Deen", our culture and our morals were not valued and continued to decline more and more. Certainly the imperialist deluge cannot be confronted with another flood or wave and certainly not by rocks or mountains.

There was no power here that could raise the banner of Islam against the power of Western imperialism and colonialism. We were satisfied only with the preservation of our heritage and in these efforts those things were also conserved which were lifeless and actually did not deserve to be saved. Their preservation could not guarantee the safety of Islam's dignity against an overwhelming and dominating power. This is the reason that when we glance at the history of the last 60 to 70 years we do not find Islam and Islamic culture to be progressing. In fact we see that it was continuously in a state of decline. Every year month and day it kept declining and contracting and the Western culture and civilization kept

growing and expanding. Every new day, Western intellectual misguidance, moral filth and deviant practice captured some more of our religious and moral space and this defeat could not be reversed by the protectors of our old way of life.

The third loss was that our religious class was protecting and preserving the mixture of Islam and non-Islam both intellectually and in practice. Therefore our well to do class and intellectual class did not have any attraction towards it. In fact that attraction became less and less with every passing day. On the one hand the opposite foreign culture was captivating, hypnotizing and dazzling our eyes and minds with its modern and gigantic resources and on the other hand Islam was being represented by such debates, problems, hobbies and manifestations that confused the minds and had little appeal to the hearts and much less glitter to the eyes.

That is why the people having material resources and intellectual capability soon lost whatever little interest they had in religion and kept getting absorbed in the Western culture. And the legacy and duty of carrying religious responsibilities gradually became exclusive for the groups that were backward materially, intellectually and economically. This meant that our religious front became weaker and weaker and the Western front became more and more strong. But more than this the real tragedy was that the standard (flag) of Islam kept falling down on all platforms in that intellectually, morally, linguistically and knowledge wise Islam kept declining till a time when the dignity, eminence and prestige of "Deen" could no longer be protected.

The last and biggest loss because of this policy was that the people of "Deen" were dislodged from their position of leadership and providers of guidance to Muslims. To guide and lead Muslims in every aspect of education, culture, social system and politics became the job of those who did not understand religion and who did not feel obliged to seek guidance from religion before embarking on any new initiative. They had a Western education, their life-style was Westernized, their earning was based on Western economic

pattern and their social life and morals were immersed in imitating the West and based on Western values and principles They had taken "Sharia'" from the Western law colleges and had practiced only that brand of "Sharia". They had learnt all the tricks of divisive politics from the West.

Thus this class implemented whatever they got from their Western and colonial masters. And the whole nation followed them in full confidence and with complete trust. The religious groups were pushed to the side-lines and on the fringes and if at all had any role in the affairs of this world then it was that either they should isolate themselves from society and involve themselves in teaching and learning "Deen" . They should make "dua" for whoever ascends the political leadership of the nation or whenever they get an opportunity to enter politics then they must follow some or the other worldly political leader like an ineffective and unimportant courtier. Whether it was the Congress or the Muslim League, these religious groups always went as followers. They had no role in framing the policy anywhere. They could not stop any big deviation or even criticize it. The only work left from them was to bless the Godless and irreligious policies and secular leadership and assure Muslims that these policies are not against the Quran and Sunnah do not pose any danger to their religion.

This disease grew and reached such a level that secular leadership started getting blessings from many a religious and venerated personality. Is it not regretful that their religious zeal becomes so sharp for the poor and insignificant that the lack of one fistful length of one beard renders one to be out of the pale of Islam and differences in certain small secondary and unimportant matters from the point of view of jurisprudence are blown out of proportion and described as if those differences make up the whole of "Deen". But in contrast the political leaders who have the backing of the nation and who receive their "hosannas" and who establish their political clout are offered full and complete support even if at their hands the entire building of religion is being decimated.

What do we want?

Gentlemen this was the detailed analysis of our history and our present situation. I have not done this analysis to insult somebody but in fact presented it to facilitate your study and analysis of the present situation. You must then examine the line of action which we have adopted for Pakistan solely on the basis of Allah's Grace and Help and (how) we want it to spearhead the global revival of Islam.

From what I have told so far, you must have realized how vast is the scope of the numerous problems and different ills that afflict us and how they have penetrated every aspect of our national life. And from my speech it also must have struck you that whatever ills we find today, each has emanated from a particular reason and has flowered and grown and gradually reached the present level. You must have by now surely come to know the depth of its roots in our history, traditions, culture, education and politics. You must have also realized how these ills and problems through different and various aspects combine together and assist each other.

After that I do not think that any person with sound insight would hesitate in accepting the fact that in these conditions any attempt at only partial reform cannot be effective. You can open "Deeni-Madaris" (religious seminaries), teach how to pray and profess the "kalima", deliver speeches and sermons against tumult and oppression, protest against deviant sects. However by doing so, the maximum you can get is slowing down the pace at which the "Deen" of Islam is being destroyed and resuscitate religious life, so that it can breathe a little longer. But you cannot expect that through these partial attempts Islam will be elevated and the powers of Jahiliyyah (Ignorance) would become dwarfed. Because those responsible for trying to bring down Islam and elevating "Jahiliyyah" have not been eliminated and are still present and are able to function quite systematically.

Again if you think that the existing system should stand on the same foundations as perpetrated by the West and some

half-hearted and partial attempts should be made to reform our morality, social system, economics, administration and politics; then allow me to say that all such attempts would definitely end in failure. Because as long as you are appreciative and submissive to everything of the present Western system where every evil is being supported by other evils, you cannot expect any meaningful reform. For such conditions, driving away an all-encompassing and comprehensive mischief ("Fasaad") on earth can only be accomplished with a complete and consummate programme. That programme or line of action must be able to continue the work of reform and improvement from the root level to the highest levels and that too in a balanced way. But what is that programme and what importance it holds for us? I would like to talk about it now but before doing that, I need an answer to one question which is "What exactly do you want"? Or to put it more precisely: ''among you, who desires what"?

The need for focus & concentration

The reality is that we have reached such a stage where continued experimentation with this blend and mixture of "Islam and Jahiliyyah" as our "way of life" cannot continue any longer. If it continues then it would result in our complete destruction in this world and also in the Hereafter. Because of which we are in a situation that we neither have full "Iman" (faith) and neither have we managed to get rid of the elements of "Kufr" (unbelief). Neither can we like America, Russia and England focus on this world and prosper because our spiritual relation with faith and Islam does not allow us to tread this path unfettered. Neither can we like true Muslims work towards success in the Hereafter. Because "this work" is not allowed by the forces of "Jahiliyyah" whose countless evils we have nurtured within ourselves. This half-hearted approach prevents us from doing full justice to either; neither in the service of God nor in the service of this world.

That is why every work that we undertake be it worldly or religious, remains the battlefield for two contrasting and

opposing inclinations and philosophies which cancel and neutralize each other. Our thoughts and inclinations do not synchronize completely as they should. However it is imperative that we end this condition soon. If we are not our own enemies then we must learn to become focused. This focus and concentration can be achieved only through two means and we must examine which is more suitable for us.

One way is that we should adopt the way of life and culture which our colonial masters wanted us to follow and then leave aside Allah, the "Akhirah" (Hereafter), religion, religious culture and morals and construct and develop a completely new materialistic culture. So that this country becomes another America or Russia. But not only is this path wrong, against truth and justice and totally destructive; I would say that it is not possible for it to succeed in Pakistan. Because in the traditions and the psyche that is prevalent here the love for Islam has such deep roots that to uproot and throw them away is not possible for any human power. Those who still want to walk on this path and bring about this "Godless" culture are not my addressee. We do not present our programme before them but in fact declare to them an ultimatum for combat and confrontation!

The other way of focus is that for individual and public life we choose this path which has been shown to us by Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). We want only this, and we feel that at least 999 out of 1000 Muslim population of Pakistan desire the same.

The truth is that whoever believes in God and His Prophet (pbuh) and believes in life after death should desire thus. But whosoever loves this path must fully understand that the conditions through which we are passing and in which we now find ourselves; in these conditions for Islam and only Islam to be adopted as the guiding philosophy for Pakistan and made the dominant way of life is not an easy task.

For that we should dilute the mixture between Islam and non-Islam which centuries of traditions have fortified and

strengthened. We must separate the parts of our legacy and heritage and take only the pristine form of Islam which is proved by Quran and Sunnah.

Obviously this work is not going to happen without the opposition of those groups which have some or the other attachment to this heritage or legacy. For that it is also required that we separate the good points that the West has to offer like its scientific knowledge and technical progress from the misguidance of its philosophies, theories, culture and social system. We must take the former and completely discard the latter.

Clearly this will not be tolerated by those groups who have made "Westernism" or some or the other Western edition of Islam as their religion. For this it is also required that we have such people who can work systematically and with discipline and have an Islamic temperament and creative talents and capabilities. They should have strong character, sound morals and firm determination and resolve. This species is anyways very rare and to get such kind of people is always very difficult as it is not easy to get people who tolerate political and economic losses and when attacked by religious edicts, "fatwas", lies and allegations do so with complete patience, calm and tranquillity.

After all these preconditions it is also necessary that to establish Islam as a way of life the movement should be comprehensive, active and generate a momentum like the flood of Western culture that came here and overwhelmed and dominated all aspects of life. Without this momentum and comprehensiveness neither is it possible to dislodge the Western culture from its seat of power nor is it possible that in the present system of education, law, politics and economics an entirely different civilization exclusively along Islamic laws be resurrected and established.

This is all that we desire, hope and pray. In our viewpoint what is required in the sub-continent of India and Pakistan is not the revival of the old culture but the revival of Islam. We

are not opposed to modern sciences and its resultant progress but are opposed to culture and civilization which is based on Western way of life and Western morals. We do not want to merely fill mosques and do politics but we want to filter out and organize the people in our community who want Quran and Sunnah to be the dominant way of life and are ready to fight both traditionalism and modernism. We do not wish to have Islam only in some aspects of life but want that Islam should dominate and rule the whole life and all its different aspects. Islam should rule individual life and family life, the rulers and administrators, means of production and wealth distribution. Only by this comprehensive dominance of Islam would it be possible for Pakistan to become focused and get those moral spiritual and material benefits which is the inevitable and natural outcome of following Divine guidance. And only through it can we expect Pakistan to become an invitation towards good for all Muslim countries and a centre of guidance for the entire world.

OUR PROGRAMME or LINE OF ACTION

After understanding our objective people should have no difficulty in understanding our line or course of action. It has 4 major components which I shall describe separately.

New understanding and creation of thoughts and ideas

This new and better understanding of our outlook and thought process along with creating a new way of thinking should be with a view to clean and clear up the un-Islamic philosophies and practices of the old culture and civilization, highlight and accentuate the original and simple traditions of Islam, to criticize Western science and technology, Western culture and civilization and point out what all is wrong in it and should be avoided and what all is good (in the West) and must be adopted. And also it should be demonstrated how Islamic principles can be applied to the contemporary issues and problems and how a virtuous and pious society can be

established and what would be the framework of each and every aspect of life. Thus the way we think would change and with that lives also would be transformed. And there will be intellectual input for the rejuvenation and reconstruction of new thought.

Search for virtuous individuals

This shall take place through training and organization. For this we need to search for men and women who are free from both the old and new ills and weaknesses or are ready to rid themselves of those ills and weaknesses, who have a spirit to reform society, who after accepting the Truth are ready to sacrifice their time, resources and efforts irrespective of being from modern or traditional education background, irrespective of being from the elite or the masses and irrespective of being from the upper, lower or middle class. Wherever we find such people we should thrust them from the safety of their seclusion into the limelight and centre-stage of efforts and hard work.

The pious and virtuous element of society exists in a small number but because they are dispersed or because they are involved in attempts for the partial and not total reform of society, they are unable to produce useful results. They have to be organized centrally and offered a very strategic programme so that they can work towards the reformation of society in a disciplined way. Then it must also be ensured that we do not stop after establishing and organizing such a group. Rather efforts must be made towards the intellectual and moral training of this group. So that their thinking becomes very mature and their character is extremely pious, noble, strong and reliable.

We must never forget the fact that an Islamic system cannot be established by theoretical models and verbal claims. The establishment and protection of the Islamic system is completely dependent on people with creative and constructive talents and with pious and noble character. The theoretical models by the Grace of Allah can always be enhanced through

knowledge and experience. But the lack of talent and virtuosity cannot be compensated and no Islamic system can be founded in its absence and if founded shall not be able to survive.

The efforts for public reform

For this all segments of society must be reformed according to their condition and situation. The scope of this comprehensive public reform is only limited by the resources of the people carrying it out. The cadre must be distributed in different segments or strata of society according to their qualifications and capabilities. Thus cadre must be allocated work only after checking if he/she is suitable or fit for that job. Some of the cadre will work in the cities and some in the villages; some among the farmers and some among the workers and labour; some shall address the middle class and some the upper class; some shall approach the working and professional class and some the business class and the industrialists. Some will concentrate on the traditional centres of learning and some on new modern education institutes. Some will work on demolishing the stagnation and some on the evils and godlessness in society. Some can work in the fields of arts and literature and some in research and development. Even though all of them would be working in different fields they would be having the same singular purpose and programme to which they try to bring and unite all the segments, classes and strata of society.

Their objective should be to remove the intellectual and moral anarchy along with the chaos and confusion in deeds and practice that is now prevalent because of the old passive and new apologetic trends in society. And the correct Islamic spirit, correct Islamic character and the correct Islamic lifestyle must be created both in the intelligentsia and the masses. This work cannot be done merely through books and media, sermons and counselling and individual contacts and dialogue. It can be achieved only through the design of creative and constructive programmes in different fields. For example wherever these reformers are successful in convincing a few people of their

ideology, they must organize them into a local unit and then start implementing work with their help which have some of the following:

1. Reformation of the local community mosques
2. Enlightening ordinary masses about the fundamentals of Islam
3. Provision of Adult Education
4. At least one Centre for learning
5. Collective efforts to save people from oppression and exploitation
6. Maintenance of community health and hygiene
7. Preparing database of orphans, widows, poor and needy and attempt to help them in cash and kind through different channels
8. Establish primary or high school and such a religious institution of learning that imparts both the secular and moral education.
9. Similarly those who work amongst the workers and the labour should not stop merely at sermonizing to prevent them from turning into communists but try to solve their problems and issues. They must establish such labour-unions whose mission is to establish justice and not to establish state control over the means of production. Their objective should be struggle for obtaining the just and legitimate rights of labour and not class struggle. Their methodology must be moral and constitutional and not destructive and violent. They should not focus merely on their rights but also their responsibilities. The workers or cadre who join them must be encouraged to discharge their duties with honesty and integrity. Then their work of reformation must not be confined and limited only to that particular class but their unions must reform their religious, moral and economic condition.

The fundamental principle of this overall reformation is that those working in a particular class and stream should do so

continuously in a disciplined way and must not stop their efforts till results are achieved. We must avoid sowing our seeds randomly and without a plan and scheme. In contrast we must work as a farmer does, who takes a fixed area or field of work. Then from the implanting seeds to harvesting he works continuously till he reaches a definitive result. The first way of working produces jungles while the latter creates farms and gardens.

Reforming the (government) / system of governance

It is our firm belief that none of the present programmes and schemes is capable of removing the ills and weaknesses in our society unless there is a serious attempt to rectify our system of governance or our government along with the other efforts of reforming society. Because the evils that are being spread under the patronage of education, law, administration and distribution of wealth cannot be confronted and our efforts towards reform and reconstruction of society can never be effective through mere sermons and counselling. That is why if we really want to change the way of life from mischief and degradation to the straight divinely ordained and blessed path then it is absolutely essential to remove the evil from the seat of power and replace it with good directly.

It is well known that if power is in the hands of good and pious people then the policies of education, law and administration will be modified in such a way that they will do in a few years which cannot happen in an entire century. How can this change be effected? In a democratic system there is only one way. And that way is of electoral politics. Public opinion must be changed, the method of selection of candidates should be changed, the way of managing and running elections should be changed and then such pious and good people should be made to run in the elections who wish to run the affairs of the state solely on the teachings of Islam and also having the capability to do so.

Our conclusion is that the reason for the ills and weaknesses in the political system is because of the way elections are conducted. When the season for elections comes around then all those who desire position and status become ready and work hard to get a ticket from any political party to fight in elections or make efforts to stand as an independent candidate. In these efforts they are not bound by any morals or rules. Umpteen lies, deceit, manoeuvrings, pressure (politics) and all forbidden tricks are perpetuated by them with impunity. Whoever can be bribed his vote is purchased thus, those who can be bossed and bullied are influenced thus, those who can be defrauded are tricked into giving their votes and those who can be swayed on the basis of hatred and bigotry are asked to vote in their name.

The pious and virtuous element of society does not enter in this dirty cesspool of politics at all and if by chance or by mistake they do enter politics then they have to beat a hasty retreat very quickly. The field then remains open for those who have no fear of God and who are absolutely shameless and have no hesitation to play out any gamble.

Then successful are the one who beat all other liars in lying and all other defrauders in defrauding. The electorates who vote for them and make them victorious neither think of principles, nor examine their programme and manifesto, nor check the character and capabilities of the candidate. Whoever snatches more votes from them is successful. In fact now even the real vote count is irrelevant. Bogus voters who can be purchased and corrupt polling officials through their tricks and machinations ensure the defeat of the candidates who actually got the majority of the votes and deserved to win.

Sometimes the opportunity for elections does not come at all as some corrupt and soul less magistrate because of some selfish personal vested interests or under the instructions of someone cancels or invalidates the applications of a lot of candidates by the stroke of a pen and the chosen one becomes the sole candidate in the election fray and thus gains victory at the expense of others.

Any sensible person upon seeing these conditions can realize that till as time this method of conducting elections shall continue the virtuous, honest and upright section of society shall never enter politics. In this style of election the worst of worst section of society filter out and emerge as the election candidates and then the morally repugnant and characterless way in which they fight elections on that same basis they run the affairs of the country. These ways have to be changed.

I shall present before you in brief what other ways (of conducting elections) could there possibly be because of which better people can come forward (to take part in elections). You yourself can check if we can reform the system of governance through these methods.

1. Elections should be conducted on the basis of principles and not on the basis of personality, regional or tribal interests.
2. People must be trained in such a way that they are capable of understanding that to implement a reform programme what kind of people can be appropriate and which intellectual and moral capabilities they must possess.
3. People who are themselves keen on their own candidature and willing to spend money to earn votes should be stopped, otherwise only selfish people shall win elections. Instead there must be some other method through which honest and upright people of each constituency should come together, apply their minds and ponder and search for some suitable person and request him to stand as an election candidate to represent them. The people must then struggle and work hard and sacrifice money for his elections and help him to win. Whoever wins in this fashion shall selflessly work for the betterment of the country and not personal interest.
4. Such a candidate who is nominated by the "Panchayat" of his region must be made to take a public oath that he will be compliant to the manifesto of the "Panchayat". After

reaching parliament he will work with those people who want to implement this manifesto who have been successfully elevated to Parliament in the same way but through other regions. And whenever the "Panchayat" expresses no confidence in that candidate then he should resign and come back.

5. The cadre who work hard to make this candidate successful (in the elections) should be made to take oath that they will abide by the moral limits and all the election rules and regulations. They will not appeal for votes on the basis of some prejudice, will not resort to lies and allegations and tricks, will not buy votes through money or pressure and will not resort to bogus voting. In other words from the start to the end the whole electoral battle will be conducted with truth and sincerity and with sound and upright moral principles.

I suggest that we try these five ways in the elections in our country then democracy can be purified and the people with bad morals can be stopped from taking over the reins of power in this country. It is not necessary that its better results are obtained in the first step but if we put the elections in this direction then the tone and tenor of democracy can be changed completely. It is possible that it may take 25 to 30 years or possibly even more to see meaningful change in the system of governance. But I feel that this is the correct path for change and the change that shall be brought by this will Insha-Allah be useful and strong.

Gentlemen I have put forth the complete diagnosis of the disease and its complete prescription for recovery, the method for treatment and also presented the reason why we want this treatment. After that it is now your solemn duty to form an opinion and judge how far my words are acceptable to you.

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Islamic Way of Life

THE MORAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

1. Why Differences?

A moral sense is inborn in man and, through the ages, it has served as the common man's standard of moral behaviour, approving certain qualities and condemning others. While this instinctive faculty may vary from person to person, human conscience has consistently declared certain moral qualities to be good and others to be bad. Justice, courage and truthfulness have always found praise, and history does not record any period worth the name in which falsehood, injustice, dishonesty and breach of trust have been praised; sympathy, compassion, loyalty and generosity have always been valued, while selfishness, cruelty, meanness and bigotry have never been approved of by society; men have always appreciated perseverance, determination and courage, but never impatience, fickleness, cowardice and stupidity. Dignity, restraint, politeness and friendliness have throughout the ages been counted virtues, whereas snobbery and rudeness have always been looked down upon. People with a sense of responsibility and devotion to duty have always won the highest regard, those who are incompetent, lazy and lacking in a sense of duty have never been looked upon with approval. Similarly, in assessing the standards of good and bad in the collective behaviour of society as a whole, only those societies have been considered worthy of honour which have possessed the virtues of organization, discipline, mutual affection and compassion and which have established a social order based on justice, freedom and equality. Disorganisation, indiscipline, anarchy, disunity, injustice and social privilege have always been considered manifestations of decay and disintegration in a society. Robbery, murder, larceny, adultery and corruption have always been condemned. Slander and blackmail have never been considered healthy social activities, while service

and care of the aged, helping one's relatives, regard for neighbours, loyalty to friends, aiding the weak, the destitute and the orphans, and nursing the sick are qualities which have been highly valued since the dawn of civilization. Individuals who are honest, sincere and dependable, whose deeds match their words, who are content with their own rightful possessions, who are prompt in the discharge of their obligations to others, who live in peace and let others live in peace, and from whom nothing but good can be expected, have always formed the basis of any healthy human society.

These examples show that human moral standards are universal and have been well-known to mankind throughout the ages. Good and evil are not myths, but realities well understood by all. A sense of good and evil is inherent in the very nature of man. Hence in the terminology of the Qur'an good is called ma'ruf (a well-known thing) and evil is called munkar (an unknown thing); that is to say, good is known to be desirable and evil is known not to commend itself in any way.

As the Qur'an says:

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾ (الشمس)

God has revealed to human nature the consciousness and cognition of good and evil. *(al-Shams 91: 8)*

The question that now arises is: if what constitutes good and evil is so clear and universally agreed, why do varying patterns of moral behaviour exist in the world? Why are there so many conflicting moral philosophies? Why do certain moral standards contradict each other? What lies at the root of their differences? What is the unique position of Islam in the context of other ethical systems? On what grounds can we claim that Islam has a perfect moral systems? And what exactly is the distinctive contribution of Islam in the realm of ethics? Although these are important questions and must be squarely faced, justice cannot be done to them in the brief span of this talk. So I shall restrict myself to a summary of some of the points crucial to any critical examination of contemporary ethical systems and conflicting patterns of moral behaviour:

(a) Through their failure to prescribe specific limits and roles for the various moral virtues and values, present-day moral structures cannot provide a balanced and coherent plan of social conduct.

(b) The real cause of the differences in the moral systems seems to lie in their offering different standards for judging what constitutes good and bad actions and in their laying down different ways to distinguish good from evil. Differences also exist in respect of the sanction behind the moral law and in regard to the motives which impel a person to follow it.

(c) On deeper reflection we find that the grounds for these differences emerge from different peoples' conflicting views and concepts of the universe, the place of man in it, and of man's purpose on earth. The various systems of ethics, philosophy and religion are in fact a record of the vast divergence of views on such vital questions as: Is there a God of the universe and, if there is, is He the only one or are there many Gods? What are the Divine attributes? What is the nature of the relationship between God and human beings? Has He made any arrangements for guiding humanity through the vicissitudes of life or not? Is man answerable to Him or not? And if so, in what spheres of his life? Is there an ultimate aim of man's creation which he should keep in view throughout his life? Answers to these questions will determine the way of life, the ethical philosophy and the pattern of moral behaviour of the individual and society.

It is difficult for me, in this brief talk, to take stock of the various ethical systems in the world and indicate what solutions each one of them has proposed to these questions and what has been the impact of these answers on the moral evolution of the society believing in these concepts. Here I have to confine myself to the Islamic concept only.

2. The Islamic Concept of Life and Morality

The viewpoint of Islam is that the universe is the creation of God who is One. He alone is its Master. Sovereign and Sustainer, and it is functioning under His command. He is All-powerful and Omniscient. He is Subbuh and Quddus (that is, free from all defects, mistakes, weaknesses and faults and is holy in every respect). His godhood is free from partiality and injustice. Man is His creature, subject and servant and is born to serve and obey Him. The correct course of life for man is to live in complete obedience to Him. And it is for God, not man, to determine the mode of that worship and obedience. At certain times God has raised Prophets for the guidance of humanity and has revealed His books through them. It is the duty of man to live his life according to the dictates of God and to follow the Divine guidance. Man is answerable to God for all his actions and will be called on to render an account of them in the Hereafter. Man's short life on earth is really an opportunity to prepare for that great test. He will be impartially assessed on his conduct in life by a Being who keeps a complete record not merely of his movements and actions and the influence on all that is in the world-from the tiniest speck of dust to the highest mountains but also of his innermost thoughts and feelings and intentions.

3. The Goal of Moral Effort

This concept of the universe and of man's place in it indicates the real and ultimate good which should be the object of all mankind's endeavours -'seeking the pleasure of God'. This is the standard by which Islam judges all conduct. It means that man is not left like a ship without moorings at the mercy of winds and tides; instead, we have a set of unchangeable norms for all moral actions. Moreover, by making the 'pleasure of God' the object of man's life, unlimited possibilities are opened for man's moral evolution, untainted by narrow selfishness or racism or chauvinism.

Islam also furnishes us with the means to determine good and evil conduct. It does not base our knowledge of evil and virtue on mere intellect, desire, intuition or experience derived through the senses, which constantly undergo changes and modifications and thus fail to provide definite and unchanging standards of morality. Instead, it provides us with an objective source, the Divine revelation, as embodied in the Book of God and the Sunnah (way of life) of the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him. This source prescribes a standard of moral conduct that is permanent and universal and holds good in every age and under all circumstances. The moral code of Islam ranges from smallest details of domestic life to the field of national and international behaviour. It guides us at every stage in life and makes us free from exclusive dependence on other sources of knowledge, although we may of course, use these as an aid to this primary source.

4. Sanction Behind Morality

This concept of the universe and of man's place in it also provides the sanction that must lie at the back of every moral law, that is, the love and fear of God, the sense of accountability on the Day of Judgement and the promise of eternal bliss and reward in the Hereafter. Although Islam aims to cultivate a mass ethos which may induce individuals and groups to observe the principles of morality it lays down as well as helps the evolution of a political system which will enforce the moral law through its legislative and executive powers, Islam's moral law does not really depend on these external factors. It relies on the inherent desire for good in every man which is derived from belief in God and the Day of Judgement.

Before laying down any moral injunctions, Islam seeks to implant firmly in man's heart the conviction that his dealings are with God, who sees him at all times and in all places; that he may hide himself from the whole world but not from God; that he may deceive everyone but God; that he can flee from the power of any person but not from God; that while the world

can see only man's outward life, God knows his innermost intentions and desires; that while man may, in his short sojourn on earth, do whatever he likes, he has to die one day and present himself before the Divine court of justice where no special pleading or deception will be of any avail and where his future will be decided with complete impartiality. It is this belief in accountability to God which is the real force behind the moral law of Islam. If public opinion and the powers of the state give it support, so much the better; otherwise, this faith alone can keep a Muslim individual and a Muslim community on the straight path of virtue.

5. Motives and Incentives

The fact that a man voluntarily and willingly accepts God as his Creator and obedience to God as the aim of his life and strives to seek His pleasure in his every action provides sufficient incentive to obey the commandments which he believes to be from God. Belief that whoever obeys the Divine commands is sure to be rewarded in the Hereafter, whatever difficulties he may have to face in his life on earth, is another strong incentive for leading a virtuous life. And the belief that breaking the commandments of God will mean eternal punishment is an effective deterrent against violation of the moral law, however tempted a man may be by the superficial attractiveness of a certain course of action. If this hope and fear are firmly ingrained in one's heart, they will inspire virtuous deeds even on occasions when the immediate consequences may appear to be very damaging, and they will keep one away from evil when it looks extremely attractive and profitable. This clearly indicates that Islam possesses a distinctive criterion of good and evil, its own source of moral laws, and its own sanctions and motivating force; through them it shapes the generally recognized more virtues in all spheres of life into a balanced and comprehensive scheme and ensures that they are followed. It can therefore be justifiably claimed that Islam possesses a perfect moral system of its own. This system has many distinguishing features and I shall refer to three of the

most significant ones which, in my opinion, form its special contribution to ethics.

6. Distinctive Features

1. By setting Divine pleasure as the objective of man's life, Islam has set the highest possible standard of morality, providing boundless possibilities for the moral evolution of humanity. By making Divine revelation the primary source of knowledge, it gives permanence and stability to moral standards, while at the same time allowing scope for reasonable flexibility and adjustment, though not for perversions or moral laxity. The love and fear of God become the real motives, which impel man to obey the moral law without external pressures. And through belief in God and the Day of Judgement, we are motivated to behave morally with earnestness and sincerity.
2. The Islamic moral order does not, through a mistaken love of originally and innovation, seek to lay down any new moral standards; nor does it seek to minimize the importance of the well-known moral standards, or give exaggerated importance to some and neglect others without cause. It takes all the recognized morals and assigns a suitable role to each within the total scheme of life. It widens the scope of their application to cover every aspect of man's private and social life -his domestic associations, his civic conduct, and his activities in the political, economic, legal and educational fields. It covers his life at home and in society, literally from the cradle to the grave. No sphere of life is exempt from the universal and comprehensive application of the moral principles of Islam. These ensure that the affairs of life, instead of being dominated by selfish desires and petty interest, are regulated by the dictates of morality.
3. The Islamic moral order guarantees for man a system of life which is free from all evil. It calls on the people not only to practice virtue, but also to eradicate vice. Those

who respond to this call are gathered together into a community (Ummah) and given the name 'Muslims'. The main purpose underlying the formation of this community is that it should make an organized effort to establish and enforce goodness and suppress and eradicate evil. It would be a day of mourning for this community and a bad day for the entire world if its efforts were at any time directed towards establishing evil and suppressing good.

The Political System of Islam

1. Democracy in Islam
2. Purpose of the Islamic State
3. Fundamental Rights
4. Executive and Legislature

The political system of Islam is based on three principles: *Tawḥīd* (unity of God), *Risālat* (prophethood) and *Khilāfat* (vicegerency). It is difficult to appreciate the different aspects of Islamic polity without fully understanding these three principles. I will therefore begin with a brief exposition of what they are.

Tawḥīd means that only God is the Creator, Sustainer and Master of the universe and of all that exists in it -organic or inorganic. The sovereignty of this kingdom is vested only in Him. He alone has the right to command or forbid. Worship and obedience are due to Him alone, no one and nothing else shares it in any way. Life, in all its forms, our physical organs and faculties, the apparent control which we have over nearly everything in our lives and the things themselves -none of them has been created or acquired by us in our own right. They have been bestowed on us entirely by God. Hence, it is not for us to decide the aim and purpose of our existence or to set the limits of our authority; nor is anyone else entitled to make these decisions for us. This right rests only with God, who has created us, endowed us with mental and physical faculties, and provided material things for our use. This principle of the unity of God totally negates the concept of the legal and political

independence of human beings, individually or collectively. No individual, family, class or race can set themselves above God. God alone is the Ruler and His commandments are the Law. The medium through which we receive the law of God is known as Risalat. We have received two things from this source: the Book in which God had set out His law, and the authoritative interpretation and exemplification of the Book by the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, through word and deed, in his capacity as the representative of God. The Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, has also, in accordance with the intention of the Divine Book, given us a model for the Islamic way of life by himself implementing the law and providing necessary details where required. The combination of these two elements is called the Shariah.

Now consider *Khilāfat*. According to the Arabic lexicon, it means 'representation'. Man, according to Islam, is the representative of God on earth, His vicegerent. That is to say, by virtue of the powers delegated to him by God, he is required to exercise his God-given authority in this world within the limits prescribed by God. Take, for example, the case of an estate which someone has been appointed to administration on your behalf. You will see that four conditions are invariably met.

First, the real ownership of the estate remains vested in you and not in the administrator; second, he administers your property only in accordance with your instructions; third, he exercises his authority within the limits prescribed by you; and fourth, in the administration of the trust he executes your will and not his own. These four conditions are so inherent in the concept or 'representation' that if any representative fails to observe them he will rightly be blamed for breaking the covenant which was implied in the concept of 'representation'. This is exactly what Islam means when it affirms that man is the vicegerent of God on earth. Hence, these four conditions are also involved in the concept of *Khilāfat*.

A state that is established in accordance with this political theory will in fact be a human caliphate under the sovereignty of God and will do God's will by working within the limits prescribed by Him and in accordance with His instructions and injunctions.

1. Democracy in Islam

The above explanation of the term Khilafat also makes it abundantly clear that no individual or dynasty or class can be Khalifa, but that the authority of caliphate is bestowed on any community which accepts the principles of Tawhid and Risalat. In such a society, each individual shares the God given caliphate. This is the point where democracy begins in Islam. Every person in an Islamic society enjoys the rights and powers of the caliphate of God and in this respect all individuals are equal. No one can deprive anyone of his rights and powers. The agency for running the affairs of the state will be established in accordance with the will of these individuals, and the authority of the state will only be an extension of the powers of the individuals delegated to it. Their opinion will be decisive in the formation of the Government, which will be run with their advice and in accordance with their wishes. Whoever gains their confidence will carry out the duties of the caliphate on their behalf; and when he loses this confidence he will have to relinquish his office. In this respect the political system in Islam as perfect a democracy as ever can be. What distinguishes Islamic democracy from Western democracy is that while the latter is based on the concept of popular sovereignty the former rests on the principle of popular Khilafat. In Western democracy the people are sovereign, in Islam sovereignty is vested in God and the people are His caliphs or representatives. In the former the people make their own laws; in the latter they have to follow and obey the laws (Shari 'ah) given by God through His Prophet. In one the Government undertakes to fulfil the will of the people; in the other the Government and the people alike have to do the will of God. Western democracy is a kind of absolute authority

which exercises its powers in a free and uncontrolled manner, whereas Islamic democracy is a kind of absolute authority which exercises its powers in a free and uncontrolled manner, whereas Islamic democracy is subservient to the Divine Law and exercises its authority in accordance with the injunctions of God and within the limits prescribed by Him.

2. Purpose of the Islamic State

The Holy Qur'an clearly states that the aim and purpose of this state, built on the foundation of Tawhid, Risalat and Khilafat, is the establishment, maintenance and development of those virtues which the Creator of the universe wishes human life to be enriched by, and the prevention and eradication of those evils which are abhorrent to God. The state in Islam is not intended for political administration only nor for the fulfilment through it of the collective will of any particular set of people. Rather, Islam places a high ideal before the state for the achievement of which it must use all the means at its disposal. The aim is to encourage the qualities of purity, beauty, goodness, virtue, success and prosperity which God wants to flourish in the life of His people and to suppress all kinds of exploitation and injustice. As well as placing before us this high ideal. Islam clearly states the desired virtues and the undesirable evils. The Islamic state can thus plan its welfare programme in every age and in any environment. The constant demand made by Islam is that the principles of morality must be observed at all costs and in all walks of life. Hence, it lays down an unalterable requirement for the state to base its politics on justice, truth and honesty. It is not prepared, under any circumstances, to tolerate fraud, falsehood and injustice for the sake of political, administrative or national expediency. Whether it be relations between the rulers and the ruled within the state, or relations of the state with other states, precedence must always be given to truth, honesty and justice. It imposes obligations on the state similar to those it imposes on the individual: to fulfil all contracts and obligations; to have consistent standards in all dealings; to remember obligations as

well as rights and not to forget the rights of others when expecting them to fulfil their obligations; to use power and authority for the establishment of justice and not for the perpetration of injustice; to look on duty as a sacred obligation; and to regard power as a trust from God to be used in the belief that one has to render an account of one's actions to Him in the Hereafter.

3. Fundamental Rights

Although an Islamic state may be set up anywhere on earth, Islam does not seek to restrict human rights or privileges to the geographical limits of its own state. Islam has laid down universal fundamental rights for humanity as a whole, which are to be observed and respected in all circumstances irrespective of whether a person lives on the territory of the Islamic state or outside it and whether he is at peace with the state or at war. For example, human blood is sacred and may not be spilled without justification; it is not permissible to oppress women, children, old people, the sick or the wounded: woman's honour and chastity must be respected in all circumstances; and the hungry must be fed, the naked clothed, and the wounded or diseased treated medically.

These, and a few other provisions, have been laid down by Islam as fundamental rights for every man by virtue of his status as a human being, to be enjoyed under the constitution of an Islamic state. The rights of citizenship in Islam, however, are not confined to persons born within the limits of its state but are granted to every Muslim irrespective of his place of birth. A Muslim ipso facto becomes the citizen of an Islamic state as soon as he sets foot on its territory with the intention of living there; he thus enjoys equal rights of citizenship with those who are its citizens by birth. Citizenship must therefore be common to all the citizens of all the Islamic states that exist in the world; a Muslim will not need a passport for entry or exit from any of them. And every Muslim must be regarded as eligible for positions of the highest responsibility in an Islamic state without distinction of race, colour or class. Islam has also

laid down certain rights for non-Muslims who may be living within the boundaries of an Islamic state, and these rights must necessarily form part of the Islamic constitution. According to Islamic terminology such non-Muslims are called dhimmis (the covenanted), implying that the Islamic state has entered into a covenant with them and guaranteed their rights. The life, property and honour of a dhimmi is to be respected and protected in exactly the same way as that of a Muslim citizen. There is no difference between Muslim and Non-Muslim citizens in respect of civil or criminal law; and the Islamic state shall not interfere with the personal law of non-Muslims. They will have full freedom of conscience and belief and will be entitled to perform their religious rites and ceremonies. As well as being able to practise their religion, they are entitled to criticise Islam. However the rights given in this respect are not unlimited: the civil law of the country has to be fully respected and all criticism has to be made within its framework. These rights are irrevocable and non-Muslims can only be deprived of them if they renounce the covenant which grants them citizens, it is not permissible for an Islamic state to retaliate against its non-Muslim subjects. This injunction holds well even if all the Muslims outside the boundaries of an Islamic state are massacred.

Executive and Legislature

The responsibility for the administration of the Government in an Islamic state is entrusted to an Amir (leader) who may be likened to the President or the Prime Minister in a Western democratic state. All adult men and women who accept the fundamentals of the constitution are entitled to vote in the election for the leader. The basic qualifications for the election of an Amir are that he should command the confidence of the largest number of people in respect of his knowledge and grasp of the spirit of Islam; he should possess the Islamic attribute of fear of God; he should be endowed with the quality of statesmanship. In short, he should be both able and virtuous. A Shura (consultative council), elected by the people, will

assist and guide the Amir. It is obligatory for the Amir to administer the country with the advice of his Shura. The Amir can retain office only so long as he enjoys the confidence of the people, and must resign when he loses this confidence. Every citizen has the right to criticise the Amir and his Government, and all reasonable means for the expression of public opinion should be available. Legislation in an Islamic state should be within the limits prescribed by the Shari 'ah. The injunctions of God and His Prophet are to be accepted and obeyed and no legislative body can alter or modify them or make any new laws which are contrary to their spirit. The duty of ascertaining the real intent of those commandments which are open to more than one interpretation should devolve on people possessing a specialised knowledge of the law of Shariah. Hence, such matters may have to be referred to a sub-committee of the Shura comprising men learned in Islamic law. Great scope would still be available for legislation on questions not covered be any specific injunctions of the Shariah, and the advisory council or legislature is free to legislate in regard to these matters. In Islam the judiciary is not placed under the control of the executive. It derives its authority directly from the Shariah and is answerable to God. The judges will obviously be appointed by the Government but, once appointed, will have to administer justice impartially according to the law of God. All the organs and functionaries of the Government should come within their jurisdiction: even the highest executive authority of the Government will be liable to be called upon to appear in a court of law as a plaintiff or defendant. Rulers and ruled are subject to the same law and there can be no discrimination on the basis of position, power or privilege. Islam stands for equality and scrupulously adheres to this principle in the social, economic and political realms alike.

SOCIAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

The foundations of the social system of Islam rest on the belief that all human beings are equal and constitute one single fraternity.

1. Equality of Mankind

God created a human couple to herald the beginning of the life of mankind on earth, and everybody living in the world today originates from this couple. The progeny of this couple were initially a single group with one religion and the same language. But as their numbers gradually increased, they spread all over the earth and, as a natural result of their diversification and growth, were divided into various tribes and nationalities. They came to speak different languages; their modes of dress varies; and their ways of living also differed widely. Climates and environments affected their colour and physical features. All these differences exist in the world of reality and Islam does not seek to ignore them. But it disapproves of the prejudices which have arisen among mankind because of these differences in race, colour, language and nationality. Islam makes clear to all men that they have come from the same parents and are therefore brothers and equal as human beings. Islam says that if there is any real difference between man and man it cannot be one of race, colour, country or language, but of ideas, beliefs and principles. Two children of the same mother, though they may be equal from the point of view of a common ancestry, will have to go their different ways in life if their beliefs and moral conduct differ. On the contrary, two people, one in the East and the other in the West, even though geographically and outwardly separated by vast distances, will tread the same path in life if they share the same code of moral behaviour. On the basis of this fundamental tenet, Islam seeks to build a principled and ideological society very different from the

racial, nationalistic and parochial societies existing in the world today. The basis of co-operative effort among men in such a society is not the place of one's birth but a creed and a moral principle. Anyone, if he believes in God as his Master and Lord and accepts the guidance of the Prophets as the law of his life, can join this community, whether he is a resident of America or Africa, whether he belongs to the Semitic race or the Aryan, whether he is black or fair-skinned, whether he speaks a European language or Arabic. All those who join this community will have the same rights and social status. They will not be subjects to any racial, national or class distinctions. No one will be regarded as high or low. There will be no untouchability. There will be no special restrictions upon them in making marriages, eating and drinking and social contacts. No one will be looked down upon because of his birth of work. No one will claim any distinctive rights by virtue of his caste, community or ancestry. Man's merit will not depend on his family connections or riches, but only on whether he is better than others in moral conduct or excels others in piety and righteousness. Such social order, transcending as it does geographical boundaries and the barriers of race, colour and language, is appropriate for all parts of the world; on its foundations can be raised the universal brotherhood of man. In societies based on race or nationality only those people can join who belong to a particular race or nation, but in Islam anyone who accepts its creed and moral standards can become a member, possessing equal rights with everyone else. Those who do not accept this creed, while obviously not being received into the community, are treated with tolerance and humanity and guaranteed all the basic human rights. It is clear that if two children of the same mother differ in their ideas, their ways of life will be different; but this does not mean that they cease to be brothers. In the same way, if two nations or two groups of people living in the same country differ in their fundamental beliefs, principles and ideology, their societies will also certainly differ; yet they will continue to share the common ties of humanity. Hence, the Islamic society offers to

non-Muslim societies and group the maximum social and cultural rights that can possibly be accorded.

2. Institution of the Family

The foremost and fundamental institution of human society is the family unit. A family is established by the coming together of a man and a woman, and their contact brings into existence a new generation. This then produces ties of kinship and community, which, in turn, gradually develop further ties. The family is an instrument of continuity which prepares the succeeding generation to serve human civilisation and to discharge its social obligations with devotion, sincerity and enthusiasm. This institution does not merely recruit cadets for the maintenance of human culture, but positively desires that those who are to come will be better members of society. In this respect the family can be truly called the source of the progress, development, prosperity and strength of human civilisation. Islam therefore devotes much attention to the issues relating to the family and strives to establish it on the healthiest and strongest possible foundations. According to Islam the correct relationship between man and woman is marriage, a relationship in which social responsibilities are fully accepted and which results in the emergence of a family. Sexual permissiveness and other similar types of irresponsible behaviour are not dismissed by Islam as mere innocent pastimes or ordinary transgressions. Rather, they are acts which strike at the very roots of society. Hence, Islam holds all extra-marital sex as sinful and forbidden (haram) and makes it a criminal offence. Severe punishments are prescribed to deter would-be offenders. Purdah, which regulates the free association of men and women, restrictions on erotic music and obscene pictures and the discouragement of the spread of all forms of pornography, are other weapons used in the fight to protect and strength the institution of the family. Islam does not look on adult celibacy simply with disfavour-it calls on every young man to take upon himself the social responsibilities of married life just as his parents did in their

time. Nor does Islam regard asceticism and lifelong celibacy merely as being of no benefit; it sees them as departures from the nature of man and as acts of revolt against the Divine scheme of things. It also strongly disapproves of those rites, ceremonies or restrictions which tend to make marriage the easiest and fornication the most difficult thing in society -and not vice versa as it is in most societies today. Hence, after debarring certain blood relatives from entering into matrimony with one another, it has legalised marriage with all other near and distant kith and kin. It has removed all distinctions of caste and community, and permitted matrimony of any Muslim with any other Muslim. It has urged that the mehr (dower) should be fixed at a figure which can be easily borne by both sides. It has dispensed with the necessity of priests and register offices. In an Islamic society marriage is a plain and simple ceremony which can be performed anywhere before two witnesses, though it is essential that the proceedings should not be kept secret. Society must know that the couple are now going to live as husband and wife. Within the family itself Islam has assigned to the man a position of authority so that he can maintain order and discipline as the head of the household. Islam expects the wife to obey her husband and look after his well-being; and it expects the children to behave accordingly to their parents. Islam does not favour a loose and disjointed family system devoid of proper authority, control and discipline. Discipline can only be maintained through a central authority and, in the view of Islam, the position of father in the family is such that it makes him the fittest person to have this responsibility. But this does not mean that man has been made a household tyrant and woman has been handed over to him as a helpless chattel.

According to Islam the real spirit of marital life is love, understanding and mutual respect. If woman has been asked to obey her husband, the latter has been called on to treat the wife with love, affection and sweetness and to make the welfare of his family his top priority. Although, Islam places great emphasis on the marital bond, it only wants it to remain intact

as long as it if founded on the sweetness of love or there exist at least the possibility of lasting companionship. If neither of these two conditions obtain, it gives man the right of divorce and woman the right of separation; and under certain conditions, where married life has become a source of misery, the Islamic courts of justice have the authority to annul the marriage.

3. Relatives and Neighbours

After the limited circle of the family, the next social sphere is that of kinship and blood relationship. Islam wants all those who are related through common parents, common brothers and sisters or marriage to be affectionate, cooperative and helpful to each other. In many places in the Qur'an good treatment of the near relations (Dhawi-al-qurba) is enjoined. In the Hadith of the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, proper treatment of one's blood relations has been strongly emphasized and counted among the highest virtues. A person who cold-shoulders his relations or treats them indifferently in looked on by Islam with great disfavour. But this does not mean that it is an Islamic virtue to favour one's relations. If such support or bias towards one's relations results in injustice, it is repugnant to Islam, and is condemned as an act of Jahiliyyah (ignorance). Similarly, it is utterly against the principles of Islam for a government official or public servant to support his relations at public expense or to favour his kith and kin in his official decisions: this would actually be a sinful act. Fair treatment of one's relations, as enjoined by Islam, should be at one's own expense and within the limits of justice and fair-play. After relations come one's neighbours. The Qur'an has divided them into three categories: a neighbour who is also a relation; a neighbour who is a stranger; and a casual or temporary neighbour with whom one happens to live or travel for a certain time. All of them are deserving of sympathy, and peace be on him, once said that the rights of the neighbour were so strongly emphasised by the angel Gabriel that he

thought neighbours might even share one's inheritance. (Bukhari and Muslim)

In one Hadith the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, said: Anyone whose neighbour is not safe from his misdeeds is not a true Believer. (Bukhari and Muslim) Again, he said: A person who enjoys a meal while his neighbour is starving is not a true Believer. (Ahmad, Baihaqi)

The Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, was once asked about the fate of a woman who performed many Prayers and fasted extensively and who was a frequent almsgiver, but whose neighbours complained of her abusive tongue. He said: Such a woman shall be in the Hell-fire. He was, then, asked about another woman who did not possess these virtues but did not trouble her neighbours either, and he said: She would be in Paradise. (Ahmad, Baihaqi). The Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, has laid so much emphasis on being considerate to neighbours that he has advised that whenever a Muslim brings home fruit for his children he should either send some to his neighbours as a gift, or at least take care not to offend them by throwing the peelings away outside their door. On another occasion he said: A man is really good if his neighbour regard him as such, and bad if they consider him so. (Ibn Majah)

Islam, therefore, requires all neighbours to be loving and helpful and to share each other's sorrows and happiness. It enjoins them to establish social relations in which one can depend upon the other and regard his life, honour and property safe among his neighbours. A society in which two people, separated only by a wall, remain unacquainted with one another for years, and in which those living in the same area of a town have no interest or trust in one another, can never be called Islamic.

Next to these come the wider relationships covering the whole of society. The broad principles on which Islam wants people to structure their social lives are:

To cooperate in acts of goodness and righteousness and not to cooperate in acts of sin and injustice. *(al-Ma'idah 5: 2)*

One's friendship should be only for seeking the pleasure of God: whatever you give should be given because God likes it to be given, and whatever you withhold should be withheld because God wishes so. *(Tirmidhi).*

You are the best community ever raised among mankind; your duty is to command people to do good and prevent them from committing evil. *(Ale'Imran 3: 110)*

Do not think evil of each other, nor probe into each other's affairs, nor incite one against the other. Avoid hatred and jealousy. Do not unnecessarily oppose each other. Always remain the slaves of Allah, and live as brothers to each other.

(Muslim)

Do not help a tyrant, knowing his to be such. *(Abu Da'ud)*

To support the community when it is in the wrong is like falling into a well while catching the tail of your camel which was about to fall into it. *(Abu Da'ud; Mishkawt)*

No one among you shall be a true Believer unless he likes for others what he likes for himself. *(Bukhari and Muslim)*

THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM OF ISLAM

Islam has laid down certain principles and limits for the economic activity of man so that the entire pattern of production, exchange and distribution of wealth may conform to the Islamic standard of justice and equity. Islam does not concern itself with time-bound methods and techniques of economic production or with the details of organisational patterns and mechanisms. Such methods are specific to every age and are evolved in accordance with the needs and requirements of the community and the exigencies of the economic situation. Islam's concern is that whatever the particular form of economic activity in operation, its underlying principles should always be the same.

According to the Islamic point of view. God has created for mankind the earth and all that it contains. It is, therefore, the birthright of every human being to try to secure his share of the world" wealth and sustenance. Islam does not allow a particular person, class, race or group of people to create a monopoly in certain economic activities; equal opportunities for all is its watchword.

1. Right of Property

Resources which are provided by nature and which can be used directly by man be utilised freely, and everyone is entitled to benefit from them according to his needs. Water in the rivers and springs, timber in the forests, fruits of wild plants, wild grass and fodder, air , animals of the jungle, minerals under the surface of the earth and similar other resources cannot be monopolised by anyone nor can restrictions of any sort be imposed on their free use by God's creatures to fulfil their own needs. Of course, people who want to use any of these things for commercial purposes can be required to pay taxes to the state. Or, if there is misuse of the resources, the Government may intervene. But there is nothing to prevent individuals availing themselves of God's earth as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others or of the state. It is not right that things created by God for the benefit of mankind should be taken possession of, and then kept idle and useless. One should either benefit from them oneself, or make them available to others. On the basis of this principle Islam holds that no one can keep his land unused for more than three years. If, during this period, he does not himself use it for cultivation or for construction of buildings or for some other purpose, such land shall be treated as 'vacated', and anyone else who makes use of it shall not be liable to be proceeded against in law, nor shall the Government have any authority to hand it over to someone else (including the previous owner).

Anyone who takes possession of the earth's natural resources and puts them to good use acquires a rightful title over them. For instance, if somebody takes possession of an

uncultivated piece of land, on which nobody has a prior right of ownership, and makes productive use of it, he cannot be arbitrarily dispossessed of that piece of land.

This is how every right of ownership originated in the world. When man first appeared, everything and made it useful in any manner became its owner; that is to say, he acquired the right to use it specifically for his own purpose and to obtain compensation from others if they wanted to use it. This is the natural basis of all the economic activity of mankind. The rights of ownership are to be honoured, though it is always open to ascertain if a particular ownership is legally valid or not. Islam cannot approve of economic policies which destroy the rights conferred by the Shariah, however attractive their names may be and whatever welfare pretensions they may make. Social justice and collective good are very dear to Islam, but in their name the rights given by the Shariah cannot be trampled. It is as unjust to reduce or remove the restrictions placed by the Shariah, for the sake of the good of the community as a whole, on the rights of individual ownership as it is to add restrictions and limitations on them which do not fit into the Shariah. It is one of the duties of an Islamic state to protect the legal rights of individuals and, at the same time to compel them to fulfil their obligations to the community as enjoined by law. That is how Islam strikes a balance between individualism and collectivism.

2. The Problem of Equality

God has not distributed His gifts and favours equally among mankind but, in His infinite wisdom, has given some individuals more than others. Just as this is true of pleasantness of voice, excellence of physique and intellectual power and so on, so, too, is it the case with the material conditions of life. Human existence has been so ordained that divergence, variety and inequality among men in their ways and standards of living seems to be natural. Variety is the spice of life, and the driving spirit behind human endeavour and excellence. Consequently, all those ideologies which want to force an artificial economic

equality on mankind are mistaken, unrealistic and impossible to realise. The equality which Islam believes in is equality of opportunity to secure a livelihood and to climb the ladder of success and prosperity. Islam desires that no obstacles should exist in society to prevent an individual from striving for a living according to his capacity and talents; nor should any social distinctions exist with the object of safeguarding the privileges of a certain class, race, dynasty or group of people. All those ideologies which serve vested interests, or which seek to perpetuate the power of a certain group, are also repugnant to Islam and can have no place in its scheme of things. Such movements seek to establish, through force if necessary, an unnatural inequality in place of the natural limited inequality which provides incentive to effort in society. At the same time, Islam does not agree with those who want to enforce complete equality in respect of the means of production and the fruits of economic endeavour, as they aim at replacing limited natural inequality by an artificial equality.

Only that system can be the nearest to human nature in which everyone joins the economic struggle at his own level and in the circumstances in which God has created him. He who has inherited an aeroplane should make use of it; while he who has only a pair of legs should stand on his feet and try to improve his lot. The laws of society should neither be such as would establish a permanent monopoly for the aeroplane owner (over his aeroplane) and make it impossible for the barefooted to acquire an aeroplane nor such that the race for everyone should compulsorily begin from the same point and under the same conditions so that they would all be tied to each other right till the end of the race. On the contrary, economic laws should be such as to make it possible for the barefooted, who started his race under adverse conditions, to possess an aeroplane, if he can do so by dint of his effort and ability, and for he who inherited the aeroplane to be left behind in the race and to lose it, if he does not have the ability or efficiency to keep it. Effort should be rewarded and laziness penalised.

3. Social Justice

Islam does not want this economic race to take place in an atmosphere of moral neutrality and social apathy. The participants should be just and kind to one another. Islam, through its moral injunctions, aims at creating a feeling of mutual love and affection among people, through which they may help their weak and weary brethren, and at the same time create a permanent institution in society to guarantee assistance to those who lack the necessary means and abilities to succeed. People who are unable to take part in the economic race and those who need help to get started in it should receive their share of the blessings of life from this social institution. To this end Islam has commanded that Zakat should be levied at the rate of two and a half percent per annum on the total accumulated wealth [of each individual] in the country, as well as on invested capital; five percent or ten percent, depending on the method of watering, should be collected on agricultural produce; and twenty percent on certain mineral products. The annual Zakat should also be levied, at a specified rate, on cattle owned by anyone who has more than a certain minimum number. The amount of Zakat thus collected is to be spent on the poor, the orphans and the needy.

This system provided a means of social insurance whereby everyone in an Islamic society is provided with at least the necessities of life. No worker can ever be forced, through fear of starvation, to accept conditions of employment which may be unfairly imposed on him by his employer. And nobody's physical health is allowed to deteriorate for lack of proper medical care and hospitalisation. Islam aims at striking a balance between the individual and the community, which will promote individual freedom and at the same time ensure that such freedom is positively conducive to the growth and tranquillity of the community as a whole. Islam does not approve of a political or economic organisation which aims at submerging the identity of the individual beneath that of the community, and depriving him of the freedom essential for the proper development of his personality and talent. The

inevitable consequence of nationalising a country's means of production is the annihilation of the individual by the community; in these circumstances the existence and development of his individuality becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible. Just as political and social freedom is essential for the individual, economic freedom is necessary for a civilised moral existence. Unless we desire to eliminate completely the individuality of man, our social life must have enough freedom for an individual to be able to earn his living, to maintain the integrity of his conscience and to develop his moral and intellectual faculties according to his own inclinations and aptitudes. Living on the dole or on charity at the hands of others cannot be very satisfying, even if the sums involved are generous: the retardation of mental, moral and spiritual development which it ultimately leads to can never be counteracted by mere physical welfare and prosperity. Nor, does Islam favour a system of unbridled economic and social freedom which gives individuals a blank cheque to achieve their objectives at the possible cost of the good of the community as a whole, or which enables them to misappropriate the wealth of others. Between these two extremes, Islam has adopted the middle course according to which the individual is first called upon, in the interest of the community, to accept certain restrictions, and is then left free to regulate his own affairs. He has freedom of enterprise and competition within a frame work which guarantees the good of both the individual and society. It is not possible to explain all these obligations and restrictions in detail and I shall, therefore, content myself with presenting a bare outline of them.

4. Obligations and Restrictions

Take first the example of earning a living. The meticulous care with which Islam has distinguished between right and wrong in respect of the means of earning wealth is not to be found in any other legal and social system. It condemns as illegal all those means of livelihood which injure, morally or materially, the interests of another individual or of society as a

whole, Islamic law categorically rejects as illegal the manufacture and sale of liquor and other intoxicants, adultery, professional dancing, gambling, transactions of a speculative or fraudulent nature, transactions in which the gain of one party is absolutely guaranteed while that of the other party is left uncertain and doubtful, and price manipulation by withholding the sale of the necessities of life. If we examine this aspect of the economic laws of Islam, we will find a long list of practices declared illegal, most of which can and are making people millionaires in the capitalist system. Islam forbids all these by law, and allows freedom of earning wealth only by those means through which a person renders some real and useful service to the community and thereby entitles himself to fair and just compensation for it. Islam accepts the right of ownership of an individual over the wealth earned by him by legitimate means; but these rights are not unrestrained. A man can only spend his legitimate wealth in certain specified ways. He may not waste his riches on idle luxury, nor may he use his wealth to behave arrogantly towards his fellows. Certain forms of wasteful expenditure have been unequivocally prohibited while some others, though not expressly banned, may be prohibited at the discretion of an Islamic Government. One is permitted to accumulate wealth that is left over after meeting one's legitimate and reasonable commitments and these savings can also be used to produce more wealth; there are, however, restrictions on both these activities. A rich man will, of course, have to pay Zakat at the rate of two and a half percent a year on the accumulation exceeding the specified minimum. He can only invest it in a business which has been declared legitimate. In this connection, he may own the legitimate business himself or he may make his capital available to others on a profit-loss sharing basis. It is not at all objectionable in Islam if, working within these limits, a man becomes a millionaire; rather, this will constitute a Divine favour. But in the interests of the community as a whole, Islam imposes two conditions on the individual: first, that he should pay Zakat on his commercial goods and 'Ushr (one tenth) on

the value of agricultural produce; second, that he should deal fairly and honestly with those he does business with in trade, industry or agriculture, with those he employs and with the Government and the community at large. If he does not voluntarily act justly to others, particularly his employees, the Islamic state will compel him to do so.

Even wealth that is accumulated within these legal limits is not allowed by Islam to be concentrated at one point or in one place for a long time. Through its law of inheritance Islam spreads it among a large number of people from generation to generation. In this respect the Islamic law is different from that of other inheritance laws; most of them attempts to keep the wealth once accumulated by a person concentrated in the hands of one main beneficiary from generation to generation. In Islam, wealth accumulated by a person in his lifetime is distributed among all of his near relatives soon after his death. If there are no near relatives, distant relatives benefit from it in the proportions laid down by the law for each one of them. And if no distant relative is forthcoming, then the entire Muslim society is entitled to share in the inheritance. Under this law the creation or continuance of any big family of capitalists or landlords becomes impossible.

THE SPIRITUAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

What is the spiritual path in Islam and what is its place in the life as a whole? To answer this it is necessary to study carefully the difference between the Islamic concept of spirituality and that of other religions and ideologies. Without a clear understanding of this difference it often happens that, when talking about the spirituality in Islam, many of the vague notions associated with the word 'spiritual' unconsciously come to mind; it then becomes difficult for one to comprehend that this spirituality of Islam not only transcends the dualism of spirit and matter but is the nucleus of its integrated and unified concept of life.

1. Body-Soul Conflict

The idea which has influenced most the climate of philosophical and religious thought is that body and soul are mutually antagonistic, and can develop only at each other's expense. For the soul, the body is a prison and the activities of daily life are the shackles which keep it in bondage and arrest its growth. This has inevitably led to the universe being divided into the spiritual and the secular. Those who chose the secular path were convinced that they could not meet the demands of spirituality, and thus they led highly material and hedonistic lives. All spheres of worldly activity, whether social, political, economic or culture, were deprived of the light of spirituality: injustice and tyranny were the result.

Conversely, those who wanted to tread the path of spiritual excellence came to see themselves as 'noble outcasts' from the world. They believed that it was impossible for spiritual growth to be compatible with a 'normal' life. In their view physical self-denial and mortification of the flesh were necessary for the development and perfection of the spirit. They invented spiritual exercises an ascetic practices which killed physical desires and dulled the body's senses. They regarded forests, mountains and other solitary places as ideal for spiritual development because the hustle and bustle of life would not interfere with their meditations. They could not conceive of spiritual development except through withdrawal from the world. This conflict of body and soul resulted in the evolution of two different ideals for the perfection of man. One was that man should be surrounded by all possible material comforts and regard himself as nothing but an animal. Men learnt to fly like birds, swim like fish, run like horses and even terrorise and destroy like wolves-but they did not learn how to live like noble human beings. The other was that the senses should be not only human beings. The other was that the senses should be not only subdued and conquered but extra-sensory powers awakened and the limitations of the sensory world done away with. With these new conquests men would be able to hear distant voices like powerful wireless sets, see remote

objects as one does with a telescope, and develop powers through which the mere touch of their hand or a passing glance would heal the unhealable.

The Islamic viewpoint differs radically from these approaches. According to Islam, God has appointed the human soul as His Khalifah (vicegerant) in this world. He has invested it with a certain authority, and given it certain responsibilities and obligations for the fulfilment of which He has endowed it with the best and most suitable physical frame. The body has been created with the sole object of allowing the soul to use it in the exercise of its authority and the fulfilment of its duties and responsibilities. The body is not a prison for the soul, but its workshop or factory; and if the soul is to grow and develop, it is only through this workshop. Consequently, this world is not a place of punishment in which the human soul unfortunately finds itself, but a field in which God has sent it to work and do its duty towards Him.

So spiritual development should not take the form of a man turning away from this workshop and retreating into a corner. Rather, man should live and work in it, and give the best account of himself that he can. It is in the nature of an examination for him; every aspect and sphere of life is, as it were, a question paper: the home, the family, the neighbourhood, the society, the market-place, the office, the factory, the school, the law courts, the police station, the parliament, the peace conference and the battlefield, all represent question papers which man has been called upon to answer. If he leaves most of the answer-books blank, he is bound to fail the examination. Success and development are only possible if man devotes his whole life to this examination and attempts to answer all the question papers he can. Islam rejects and condemns the ascetic view of life, and proposes a set of methods and processes for the spiritual development of man, not outside this world but inside it. The real place for the growth of the spirit is in the midst of life and not in solitary places of spiritual hibernation.

2. Criterion of Spiritual Development

We shall now discuss how Islam judges the development or decay of the soul. In his capacity as the vicegerent (Khalifah) of God, man is answerable to Him for all his activities. It is his duty to use all the powers which he has been given in accordance with the Divine will.

He should utilise to the fullest extent all the faculties and potentialities bestowed upon him for seeking God's approval. In his dealings with other people he should behave in such a way as to try to please God. In brief, all his energies should be directed towards regulating the affairs of this world in the way in which God wants them to be regulated. The better a man does this, with a sense of responsibility, obedience and humility, and with the object of seeking the pleasure of the Lord, the nearer will he be to God. In Islam, spiritual development is synonymous with nearness to God. Similarly, he will not be able to get near to God if he is lazy and disobedient. And distance from God signifies, in Islam, the spiritual fall and decay of man.

From the Islamic point of view, therefore, the sphere of activity of the religious man and the secular man is the same. Not only will both work in the same spheres; the religious man will work with greater enthusiasm than the secular man. The man of religion will be as active as the man of the world - indeed, more active -in his domestic and social life, which extends from the confines of the household to the market square, and even to international conferences. What will distinguish their actions will be the nature of their relationship with God and the aims behind their actions. Whatever a religious man does, will be done with the feeling that he is answerable to God, that he must try to secure Divine pleasure, that his actions only by his personal motives. This difference makes the whole of the material life of a man of religion a totally spiritual venture, and the whole of the life of a secular person an existence devoid of the spark of spirituality.

3. The Road to Spirituality

The first pre-requisite for progression along the path of spiritual development is Iman (faith). The mind and heart of a man should always be aware: God alone is His Master, Sovereign and Deity; seeking His pleasure is the aim of all his endeavours; and His commands alone are the commands that are to be obeyed. This should be a firm conviction, based not merely on the intellect, but also on acceptance by the will. The stronger and deeper this conviction, the more profound a man's faith will be. The second stage is that of obedience (ita'at), meaning that man gives up his independence and accepts subservience to God. This subservience is called Islam (submission) in the language of the Qur'an. Thus, man should not only acknowledge God as his Lord and Sovereign but should actually submit before Him and fashion his entire life in obedience to Him. The third stage is that of Taqwa (God - consciousness). It consists in a practical manifestation of one's faith in God in one's daily life. Taqwa also means desisting from everything which God has forbidden or has disapproved of; man must be in a state of readiness to undertake all that God has commanded and to observe the distinctions between lawful and unlawful, right and wrong, and good and bad in life.

The last and the highest stage is that of Ihsan (godliness). It signifies that man has attained highest excellence in words, deeds and thoughts, identifying his will with the will of God and harmonising it, to the best of his knowledge and ability, with the Divine will. He thus begins to like what is liked by the Lord and to dislike what He dislikes. Man should then not only avoid evil, for it displeases his Lord, but should use all his powers to eradicate it from the face of the earth; he should not be content with adorning himself with the good which God wants to flourish but should also strive to attain and propagate it in the world, even at the cost of his life. A man who reaches this stage attains the highest pinnacle of spiritually and is nearest to God.

This path of spiritual development is not meant for individuals only but for communities and nations as well. Like

individuals, a community, after passing through the various stages of spiritual elevation may reach the ultimate stage of Ihsan; a state also, through all its administrative machinery, may become Momin (faithful), Muslim (obedient), Muttaqi (God-conscious) and muhsin (godly). In fact, the ideals aimed at by Islam are fully achieved only when the whole community accepts them and a muttaqi and muhsin state comes into existence. The highest form of civilisation, based on goodness is then reached.

Let us now look at the mechanism of spiritual training which Islam has laid down to prepare individuals and society for this process. The methods that Islam lays down for spiritual development rest, in addition, obviously, to faith (iman), on five pillars.

The first is the Prayer (Salat), which brings man into communion with God five times a day, reviving his remembrance, reiterating his fear, developing his love, reminding him of the Divine commands again and again, and thus preparing him for obedience to God. It is obligatory to offer some of these Prayers in Congregation as well so that the whole community and society may be prepared to journey on the path of spiritual development.

The second is the Fast (Sawm), which for all full month every year trains each man individually, and the Muslim community as a whole, in righteousness and self-restraint; it enables society, the rich and the poor alike, to experience hunger, and prepares people to undergo any hardships in their search to please God.

The third is the Almsgiving (Zakat), which develops the sense of monetary sacrifice, sympathy and co-operation among Muslims. There are people who wrongly interpret Zakat as a tax; in fact, the spirit underlying Zakat is entirely different from that of a tax. The real meaning of Zakat is sublimity and purification. By using this word, Islam seeks to impress on man the fact, inspired by a true love of God, the monetary help which he renders to his brethren will uplift and purify his soul.

The fourth is the Pilgrimage (Hajj), which aims at fostering that universal brotherhood of the faithful which is based on the worship of God, and which results in a worldwide movement that has been responding to the call of Truth throughout the centuries and will, God willing, go on answering this call till eternity.